

SUBWAY SEARCHES are stupid, useless and fascistic.
And you don't have to let them do it. p4

Nickel & Dimed at the
99 Cent Store, p15

THE INDYPENDENT

Issue #74, August 11 – 31, 2005

a **FREE** paper
for free people

GREEN STREETS

Urban Gardening Takes Root

**Special Food Issue: Dining In Babylon,
Anatomy of a Fast Food Meal & More ▶ Starting on p.6**

PHOTO: IRINA IVANOVA

**Banksy 'Bombs' Israel's
Apartheid Wall, p.15**



**An Important
& Responsible
Story About a
Tit & Its Bounty
p.12**

Black August:
History & Coming Events
p.14



NEW & IMPROVED: nyc.indymedia.org



NEW YORK CITY INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

Phone:

212.684.8112

Email:

imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org

Web:

indymedia.org

NYC: nyc.indymedia.org

U.S.: us.indymedia.org

GLOBAL: indymedia.org

Office and Mail:

NYC Independent Media Center

34 E. 29th St. 2nd Floor

NY, NY 10016

WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The Independent is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for *The Independent*, about film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

VOLUNTEER STAFF:

Kat Aaron, Chris Anderson, Jackson Allers, Silvia Arana, Jay Bachhuber, Gino Barzizza, Caitlin Benedetto, Bennett J. Baumer, Halley Bondy, Jed Brandt, Kazembe Bulagoon, Mike Burke, Robert Burns, Antrim Caskey, Alan Carrol, Rahul Chadha, Susan Chenelle, Ellen Davidson, Chris Day, Ryan Dunsmuir, Chiam Garcia, Alfredo Garzon, Neela Ghoshal, Lauren Giambrone, David Gochfeld, Maggie Gram, A.K. Gupta, Irina Ivanova, Ruth Kelton, Ida Lake, William Lindley, Edgar Mata, Nik Moore, Lydia Neri, Ana Nogueira, Donald Paneth, Erica Patino, James Powell, Nicholas Powers, Derq Quiggle, Frank Reynoso, Ann Schneider, Sheba Sethi, Andy Smenos, Andrew Stern, Maggie Suisman, John Tarleton, Xavier Tayo, Liz Tillotson, Leanne Tory-Murphy, Matthew Wasserman, Steven Wishnia, Jennifer Whitney, Amy Wolf, & Christina Zawerucha

Seeking Dignity At Potter's Field

BY JOHN TARLETON

An alliance of homeless activists and religious leaders has wrested an agreement from the city to allow monthly interfaith memorial services for the dead at Potter's Field on Hart Island. About 2,000 to 3,000 unknown or unclaimed New Yorkers are buried each year in the pauper's cemetery, which is administered by the city's Department of Corrections.

"This is about dignity in death," said Amy Gopp, a pastor with Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). "Anyone with a conscience would agree to that."

"Homeless people are treated like garbage their whole lives and are then thrown into pits," said Lynne Lewis, executive director of Picture the Homeless. "It's very personal for us."

Picture the Homeless mobilized around the issue after the group's cofounder, Lewis Haggins, Jr., died in a subway car in December 2003, and his friends and family were not notified of his burial on Hart Island as a "John Doe" until eight months later. On Aug. 2, members of Picture the Homeless and the Interfaith Friends of Potters Field met for over an hour with Department of Corrections spokesperson Tom Antenan. A tentative agreement was reached to allow regular religious services beginning in October. DOC regulations that forbid visits by non-family members will be relaxed so that several members of Picture the Homeless can hold a service for Haggins on Hart Island in September. Religious services are currently held at the city medical examiner's office.

Potter's Field reformers are also urging the Police Department's missing-persons bureau to improve their process for identifying people



NEW YORK IS THE ONLY MAJOR U.S. CITY WITH A POTTER'S FIELD. Before Hart Island, the city had eight other potter's fields, including ones at what is now Washington Square Park and Madison Square Park. The term "potter's field" has its melancholy origins in a Biblical passage (*Matthew 27: 3-8*) about Judas, who committed suicide and was buried outside Jerusalem in a field for strangers that was purchased with the 30 pieces of silver he received for betraying Jesus. PHOTO: JOEL STANFELD, FROM HIS BOOK, HART ISLAND.

who die without ID. The Police Department, the Human Resources Administration and the Department of Homeless Services all had fingerprints and photos of Haggins in their records at the time of his death, according to William Burnett of Picture the Homeless.

"If you can identify someone who has been charged with a crime within 24 hours, you should be able to do it with a dead person as well," said Burnett. "The data is there."

Melinda Hunt, coauthor of *Hart Island*, says it once took three years for her to help arrange a visit to the island for a family. "If you've lost somebody," she said, "it's a nightmare trying to make your way through the bureaucracy of the city of New York. People get lost in this city."

Hunt says burial records should be put online

so family members can locate loved ones.

Hart Island, located in Long Island Sound just off the Bronx, is a desolate one-mile long by quarter-mile wide strip of land that has been the site of a potter's field since 1868. More than 750,000 New Yorkers have been buried there. The island has also been home to a boys' reformatory, a charity hospital for women, a prisoner-of-war camp, a drug-rehabilitation center, a school for bad drivers and a Nike missile base. Access is currently restricted to a work detail of prisoners from Rikers Island who perform burials and disinterments. Adults are buried in simple pine-box coffins in mass graves of 150 people, three deep and 50 long. Children under five are buried 1,000 to a grave.

Guns Don't Kill People – Congress Does

BY ANN SCHNEIDER

In one last-minute session before the August recess, the Senate renewed the Patriot Act, dispensed pork in the Transportation bill, repealed the Depression-era Private Utility Company Holding Act (PUCHA), shielded the gun industry from its own negligence and passed the Central American Free Trade Act – all measures with no redeeming social value.

The Senate version of the Patriot Act is less bad than the House's version, since Congressman Pat Roberts dropped his quest to expand the use of mail covers and administrative subpoenas (which needn't be issued by a judge) in so-called terrorism investigations. But Roberts made it clear that he and his constituents would reassert those demands in the fall when the bill goes to a joint House-Senate conference.

The real intention of the energy bill was to revive the nuclear industry and to repeal PUHCA, a law that prevented utility mergers, and for seven decades kept consumer energy costs in the U.S. lower than in European countries. In addition, the bill provided \$2.9 billion for the coal industry and \$2.6 billion for oil and gas companies, and what Public Citizen called "cradle-to-grave subsidies for the nuclear industry."

The political climate in Congress was in part nurtured by the Environmental Protection Agency's decision not to release its annual report, due July 26, which would have revealed that average fuel efficiency has declined to 20.5 miles per gallon, down from a high of 27.5

miles per gallon in 1987.

PUCHA was adopted in response to the consolidation and pyramiding of utilities through holding companies in the 1920s. The Federal Trade Commission concluded in 1928 that the holding company structure was a menace both to consumers and investors.

By 1932, 45 percent of the nation's entire energy supply was generated by just three companies. After the crash, 53 highly leveraged holding companies became insolvent, casting off \$1.8 billion of secured debt.

With the repeal of PUCHA, utilities will become more exempt from effective state and local oversight. Didn't we learn anything from Enron?

And eager to protect the economic future of the firearms industry, both houses of Congress approved the National Rifle Association-supported bill to shield gun manufacturers and distributors from liability when their products are used to commit a crime. The only exception to this free pass was one offered by Senator Bill Frist, requiring child safety locks on each new weapon, a tactical gesture to ensure passage of the bill.

This measure was a response to the incremental success groups like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) have had in arguing that gun violence disproportionately affects African-Americans.

The NAACP won several stages of its 2003 federal lawsuit, contending that only a few gun distributors supply the vast majority of guns that result in homicides, which are the leading cause of death for black youth between 15 and

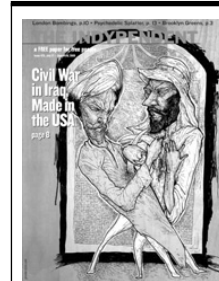
34 years old. The litigation was assisted by the former head of the gun industry trade association, who had come to believe that "a bunch of right-wing wackos at the NRA were controlling everything."

Similar suits have been brought by state and local attorney generals, and in January of this year, the United States Supreme Court permitted a California case to proceed against Glock Corporation for negligence and public nuisance. In that case, postal worker Joseph Ito was slain at the Los Angeles Jewish Community Center in 1999 by a Glock-wielding convicted felon and white supremacist, Buford Furrow.

Whether or not John Roberts is confirmed to the Supreme Court, bear in mind that gun and oil lobbyists never cease their daily efforts to pervert justice, campaign finance laws notwithstanding.

The People's Lawyer is a project of the Nat'l Lawyers Guild, NYC Chapter. Contact the chapter at www.nlgny.org or at (212) 679-6018.

**THE
PEOPLE'S
LAWYER**



CORRECTION:

The cover illustration for Issue #73 was drawn by Gino Barzizza.com

LETTERS will return in the next issue.

See nyc.indymedia.org for the online discussion and debate.

SUBWAY MADNESS

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." — Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

The city of New York has replaced those quaint 18th-century sentiments with variations on "Passengers are advised that effective July 22, 2005, all backpacks and large containers are subject to random search by police," handwritten on dry-erase boards in subway token booths.

This is an example of how people get so bowel-droppingly panicky when they hear the word "terrorism" that they'll accept anything, no matter how stupid, useless, or fascistic, if it's billed as a weapon in the "war on terror." The city police won't tell how many people they've searched, but the New York Civil Liberties Union says it's been "thousands."

OK, so there were suicide bombings in London, and the New York subways are vulnerable. That doesn't mean we have to go along with every stupid, useless, fascistic measure the government dreams up. And this is a stupid, useless, and fascistic measure.

It comes from a city government that has been closing token booths and running trains without conductors, eliminating the jobs where workers are most likely to notice when something feels wrong. It comes from a city government that hasn't bothered to teach subway workers how to look for the signs of a possible suicide bomber — their union had to hire an instructor itself. (City police officers are routinely trained to recognize the body language of people carrying guns.) It comes from a mayor and police commissioner whose policies on political protests show they have absolutely no respect for the Bill of Rights. And it comes in a country whose president ignored warnings that



TOKEN RESISTANCE: A mock MetroCard with the Fourth Amendment printed on the back, distributed in subway stations. PHOTO: ALAN CARROLL

screamed "Bin Laden Determined to Strike at US" — possibly with hijacked planes as a weapon — and once we were attacked, he "fought back" by invading Iraq.

Who really thinks that having police rifle through the lipstick, cigarettes, schoolbooks, iPods, and tampons of randomly selected straphangers is going to prevent a suicide bombing in the subway? Even Police Commissioner Ray Kelly concedes that the policy is about "perception." If the medicine tastes bad it must be effective, right?

This policy's biggest effect — quite possibly intentional — will be to get people used to being searched, to give up their fundamental rights under the illusion that they're preventing another attack. If you don't have anything to hide, it shouldn't bother you, right? And if you object to opening your bag without probable cause, you're a selfish traitor who'd rather see people get blown up than give away your precious little "rights."

As it would be impossible to

search everyone going into the subway, suspects can be chosen either at random — that is, purely for show — or by racial profiling. Two local politicians, City Councilmember James Oddo of Staten Island and Assemblymember Dov Hikind of Brooklyn, have urged the city to adopt profiling. That would make anyone who's remotely olive-skinned or darker a suspect. And just as drug-war profiling assumes that a black 20-year-old driving home from college in Virginia on the New Jersey Turnpike while booming Mos Def's latest jam on the car stereo must be a crack dealer, racial profiling for "terrorists" is far more likely to snare a full-bearded Bangladeshi newsdealer than a suicide bomber.

The "war on terror" already has its Amadou Diallo: Brazilian immigrant Jean Charles de Menezes, killed by police in London July 22. At first, British police said he was "directly linked" to the investigation of the bombing. That meant his neighbors were under suspicion. It turned out that de Menezes was guilty of nothing beyond wearing a denim jacket and fleeing when accosted by plainclothes cops, probably because he had an expired visa. But he's acceptable collateral damage, because "we can't take chances."

This mentality also applies to Americans' failure to get outraged about torture in Iraq and Guantanamo. It's been dismissed with the specious logic of "well, if you had somebody who knew there was a bomb about to go off, wouldn't it be OK to smack them around a bit until they revealed it?" Even in Israel they can't come up with any definite examples of that ever working. Does shoving electrodes up the asses of Muslim prisoners and put-

ting lit cigarettes out in their ears help catch suicide bombers? Or does it just indulge prison guards' lust for sadism, the Bush administration's wanking-in-the-mirror fetish of its "toughness," and the American public's hunger for vicarious revenge? If you use any common sense, you see that torture works best to create broken-spirited people blinded and possessed by rage — the perfect way to breed MORE suicide bombers.

We've also got politicians like Rep. Tom Tancredo of Colorado, who on July 15 speculated that if Islamic fundamentalists attacked the United States with a nuclear device, we could "take out" Mecca in retaliation. You may not have heard about it, but it outraged the Muslim world from Detroit to Dhaka — while far-right bloggers praised Tancredo for being courageously "un-PC."

Without getting into the moronic 9/11 conspiracy theories, suicide bombings and the dragged-out Iraq war help the Bush administration politically, because they keep Americans in a state of fear and hate, scared to question anything because "they attacked us." As George Orwell wrote in 1984, "the mentality appropriate to a state of war" is necessary to create the emotional basis for an oppressive, hierarchical society — in which the ideal citizen "should be a credulous and ignorant fanatic whose prevailing moods are fear, hatred, adulation, and orgiastic triumph... Since no decisive victory is possible, it does not matter if the war is going well or badly. All that is needed is that a state of war should exist."

They hate us because they hate our freedom. Anyone who cares about freedom should refuse to be searched in the subway.

PATAKI VETOES 'MORNING-AFTER PILL'

Gov George Pataki vetoed a state bill to allow over-the-counter access to the "morning-after pill." The bill passed the state assembly easily, but barely made it through the senate. It is unlikely there will be an attempt to override the veto. Pataki has a relatively moderate record on reproductive rights, but has been laying the groundwork for a probable presidential run in 2008 by toeing the party line on birth control and abortion access. Meanwhile, George W. Bush has urged the Supreme Court to uphold *Ayotte v. Planned Parenthood*, a case involving strict abortion restrictions that could set a precedent.

NO JAIL FOR LOCKDOWNS IN RACHEL CORRIE PROTEST

On Aug. 1, the last four defendants in the "Diamond District 16" case were sentenced to community service, not the jail terms District Attorney Robert Morgenthau had requested. The protesters had engaged in a "lockdown" in the heart of the diamond district, which does a lot of business with Israel, to protest the killing of Rachel Corrie by an Israeli bulldozer. Prosecutors had hoped to make an example of the activists, citing their history of direct-action protest, and pressed charges of "obstructing government administration" for blocking traffic.

STREET RENAMED FOR TEEN SLAIN BY COP

The section of Brooklyn's Lexington Avenue that runs in front of the Louis Armstrong Houses has been renamed Timothy Stansbury Jr. Avenue in remembrance of the teen shot and killed by police on a neighborhood rooftop in January 2004. A grand jury cleared Officer Richard Neri of any wrongdoing in the death despite the fact that Stansbury was unarmed and had committed no crime.

"He was no criminal. He worked at McDonald's, where he earned his money very proudly," Stansbury's mother told NY1. "Still, nothing has been done. I think this is a slap in the face to me and my family and the community. I will not accept it. I want justice."

ANOTHER RACIST BEATING IN BROOKLYN

Five weeks after a racist attack in Howard Beach, Queens, Brooklyn's Flatlands neighborhood was the scene of another vicious beating. On Aug. 6, a gang of six to eight white men attacked 29-year-old Alex Moore, a black man, with pipes and bats while spewing racial epithets. No arrests have been made.

TRACER GAS RELEASED IN MIDTOWN 'TERROR' TEST

Federal researchers conducted their second test of how gases move through city streets and subways by releasing what they claim are benign "tracer" gases through a square mile of Midtown. There was no advance notification. The tests will continue through Aug. 26, with another round scheduled for "next spring."

Meanwhile, youth asthma rates in the Bronx continue to be the highest in the country. The weapon of lung destruction? Auto exhaust from the expressways suburbanites use to commute in and out of the city.

NYCLU Files Suit to Stop Subway Searches

Charging that police searching people at random in the subways is both unconstitutional and ineffective, the New York Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit Aug. 4 seeking a federal court order to stop the practice.

"The constitutional right of people not suspected of any wrongdoing to be free from police searches is one of the most fundamental protections of our free society," the suit says. Concerns about terrorism require aggressive police tactics, it adds, but that cannot justify "subjecting millions of innocent people to suspicionless searches in a way that is virtually certain not to identify any person seeking to engage in terrorist activity and will not have any meaningful deterrent effect."

The five plaintiffs include a 32-year-old survivor of the World Trade Center attacks who had his bag searched at the Chambers Street station, a Republican lawyer who says it would be unethical to let anyone see the confidential client papers he often transports, and an Indian-born antiwar activist who fears that police searching his bag might detain him if they read the political literature he carries. —SW



58 E. 4th Street
between Bowery & 2nd Avenue

(212) 674-3623
www.4thstreetfoodcoop.org

Hours: Open every day
from 11am to 9pm

YOU NEED NOT BE A MEMBER TO SHOP.
Working members receive additional discount.

Nickel-and-Dimed on Knickerbocker Ave.

BUSHWICK BOYCOTTS STORES THAT PAY BELOW MINIMUM WAGE

BY SARAH STUTEVILLE

"They pay minimum wages. This store doesn't. That one across the street doesn't either," says Manuel Guerrero, a union organizer for the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Workers Union (RWDSU). Guerrero walks down Knickerbocker Avenue's busy retail strip in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bushwick, cataloguing abuses on streets choked with cheap clothing and sneaker shops, bodegas, and 99-cent stores.

Mexican norteño ballads play in the background on a hot and hazy July afternoon as Guerrero explains how "There are retail areas like this all over New York and Brooklyn, full of immigrant workers not being paid minimum wages."

But Knickerbocker Avenue is different, because workers like Miguel Gutierrez are fighting back. That fight was officially launched on May Day of this year when the immigrant-rights organization Make The Road by Walking announced a workers' rights campaign called "Awake, Brooklyn!" in an attempt to bring attention to the abuse of undocumented workers. But the spring-time organizing launch has turned into a long hot summer of meetings and campaigning of mixed results so far. Meanwhile accounts of abuses against workers continue.

"I thought you made \$500 a week in America," Gutierrez says quietly in Spanish over lunch at a cramped Mexican grocery along Myrtle Avenue. Gutierrez came to the United States with his brother and uncle, and within days of arriving, he walked into the Super Star 99 Cent Store on Knickerbocker Avenue and got a job. He stocked shelves, cleaned the store and provided customer service.

"My plan was to save a lot of money here, work for a few years and then return to Mexico, where I would open my own butcher shop." But that was a little over a year ago and Gutierrez is barely scraping by.

Gutierrez shares his two-bedroom apartment in Bushwick with six other workers and family members to keep his rent low. He worked at the Super Star for a year, putting in six-day weeks at 11 hours a day for \$250 a week. That amounts to about \$3.75 an hour, or \$2.25 below New York City's \$6.00 an hour minimum wage, a minimum wage that undocumented workers are legally entitled to.

For almost five years Make the Road initiated legal action against employers in the neighborhood who underpaid workers, but the group concluded that lawsuits alone were not improving working conditions in Bushwick.

"We did a survey of workers and people in the neighborhood and found things that the workers wanted: like health care, permanent higher wages, and fair treatment were really only gains that could be won if we had bargaining power. That's when we moved towards unionizing," says Andrew Friedman, one of the founders of Make the Road.

Low wages weren't the only problem at Super Star. Gutierrez and his fellow undocumented employees received no overtime pay or even regulated breaks. They were allowed one 20-minute lunch break for every 11 hours they worked, and say they weren't even allowed to leave the building to eat or buy food. They say the owner verbally abused them, and they were consistently pressured to work faster in unsafe conditions.

Gutierrez becomes visibly upset when talking about the speed-ups. He cites an example of how this pressure resulted in a serious injury when a fellow worker, Alfredo Huerta,



192,000 REASONS NOT TO BUY IN SUPER STAR 99: Bushwick discount stores pay immigrant workers as little as \$2.75 an hour. PHOTO: KAREN OH

sped down a set of rickety stairs that collapsed underneath him. He broke his foot when he hit the floor. Initially, Khubaib Massoud, Huerta's boss, offered to give him \$150 per week to compensate for lost wages. But when Huerta tried to apply for worker's compensation, Massoud — who has remained unavailable for comment — challenged the claim. A legal resolution is still pending.

When asked why all the workers stayed despite these abusive conditions, Gutierrez says, "We stayed because it seemed too uncertain, we didn't always know if there would be something better out there or not."

But Workers Unite, the core group organizing for Awake Brooklyn!, was determined to do something, and ultimately it was the stories out of abuse at the Super Star that spurred them to organize a boycott. In June, when 50 workers gathered to discuss their options, Guerrero appeared with three nervous-looking men, including Gutierrez, who loitered by the door afraid to enter. "These men who work at the Super Star 99 Cent Store are suffering abuses and would like to unionize, they're here to talk to you about a boycott."

Guerrero addressed Joel, an older man in work boots who answered Guerrero's questions quietly with downcast eyes.

"How many hours a week do you work, Joel."

"Sixty or 70," he replied, staring at his lap.

"And how many days a week is that."

"Seven."

"Joel, how much do they pay you an hour?"

"\$2.75, about \$2.75 an hour."

The room exploded in sympathetic rage. Within minutes the meeting had decided to begin their campaign for unionizing stores along Knickerbocker Avenue with a boycott against Super Star 99.

The boycott was a great success at first. For eight days, shoppers refused to enter the store, almost without exception. But on the ninth day, when campaigners arrived early to begin leafleting, they found the store closed.

Massoud had simply padlocked the graffitied metal shutter and cut the name of his store out of the dirty yellow awning.

Massoud, who has other stores in Brooklyn and Queens, had decided to cut his losses, and closed the shop. Gutierrez and the other Super Star workers were out of a job, and it seemed that the campaign might stall.

The Retail Wholesale and Department Store Workers Union immediately set out to find employment for the Super Star workers, and Make The Road alerted the New York State attorney general's office about Massoud's violations. The attorney general is now in communication with Massoud, and Andrew Friedman seems confident that he will return to Knickerbocker Avenue ready to talk with the union.

"If he [Massoud] signs a settlement with the attorney general's office and comes back and meanwhile the workers unionize, it's good. I'd read it as a full-scale success." That may seem like a lot of ifs, but Friedman is confident that the attorney general can help improve working conditions on a case-by-case basis.

And so the campaign continues. While the attorney general deals with Massoud, Workers Unite has gone back to the drawing board and says it will soon be ready to announce a new Knickerbocker boycott, but this time against a business owner without other locations, so they can exert more pressure.

Meanwhile, Gutierrez is still working for less than minimum wage at a 99-cent store in Bushwick (He says he wanted to stay in the area, and that the retail workers union could only find him better paying jobs in Manhattan). His new boss is even apparently friends with Massoud. Gutierrez claims that conditions are better, but recognizes that it is not ideal.

Despite the setbacks, Gutierrez is still hopeful and plans to continue being involved with the campaign. "I didn't used to believe that this could work or that the campaign could help, nobody did, because we didn't think anyone could really help us with the U.S. government," he says, finishing his Coke and preparing to head back to work. "But now we think that things are moving."

Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union
Your Community Financial Institution
serving your needs since 1986

Lending Products
Credit Cards
Personal Loans
Co-op Loans
Mortgage Loans
Business Loans



For more information
visit us at
www.lespfcu.org
or call us at
212.529.8197!

Financial Products

Savings Accounts
Free Checking
Share Certificates (CD)
Business Accounts
Debit and ATM Cards
Financial Education

...and More!

About Your Credit Union:

-Mission Driven
-Not-For-Profit
-Member Owned

-Community Oriented
-Reinvests money in the
community & members

-Friendly and Convenient
-A safe, sound and
democratic alternative to
traditional banks

**37 Avenue B, New
York, NY 10009**

Tel: 212.529.8197
Fax: 212.529.8368
Open: Tues-Fri
10:00-3:00 pm
Thurs 4:00-7:00 pm
& Sat 10:00-1:00 pm

**134 Avenue C, New
York, NY 10009**

Tel: 212.598.0022
Fax: 212.598.0288
Open: Mon, Wed,
Fri 1:00-7:00 pm

LABOR VOWS REPRISALS FOR TWO NY REPS WHO CAST CRITICAL “YES” VOTES

Congress Caves on CAFTA

BY SUSAN CHENELLE

Following a marathon session of arm-twisting on the part of the Bush administration on the night of July 27 — during which “the floor of the House of Representatives resembled the set of ‘Let’s Make a Deal,’” according to House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) — the House of Representatives approved the long-contested Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), by the slim margin of 217-215.

The vote was a blow to the coalition of labor, community and social justice organizations that had campaigned against CAFTA for more than two years, but they are not giving up the fight. Opponents to the agreement directed their ire toward the “CAFTA 15,” as the 15 Democrats who sided with the administration were quickly dubbed. Among them were two representatives from New York City, Rep. Ed Towns of Brooklyn and Rep. Gregory Meeks of Queens.

“Stop CAFTA” coalition members had met with both Meeks and Towns, and had felt hopeful that they would vote no. “Towns’ legislative director told us two weeks before the vote that they vote with labor on everything, that they thought this was an exploitative agreement, and that they would take a hard look at it, but that she suspected that he would vote against it,” says Burke

Stansbury of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador.

Like its predecessor, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between Canada, Mexico and the US, CAFTA eliminates tariffs on goods and services traded between the signatory countries: Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the U.S. Proponents argue that the removal of trade barriers will benefit the economies of all parties; opponents denounce the agreement for its lack of protections for labor and the environment, and point to the devastating effects NAFTA has had on workers in Mexico and the US over the past ten years, including hundreds of thousands of lost jobs, lower wages and poorer working conditions.

“We’re going to try to keep the pressure on them, and make it so they can’t forget that they sold out,” said Stansbury. “The leadership in the labor movement is saying that these people are never going to get funding again.”

What leverage organized labor still has at this point is debatable. Labor made similar threats after the passage of NAFTA in 1993, with negligible consequences. Both Meeks and Towns have received large contributions from unions in the past, but the AFL-CIO’s recent split might have made them feel that labor would be even less able to inflict any serious reprisals.

However, at a press conference at City Hall on Aug. 7, Brian McLaughlin, president of the New York City Central Labor Council, noted that unions from both sides of the split were represented in the coalition, and contended that on such broad issues labor remains united. He called the approval of CAFTA, “not a ‘yes’ vote for CAFTA, but a ‘no’ vote for good-paying American jobs.”

No one at the press conference, which was organized by the Working Families Party, was willing to commit to running candidates against either Meeks or Towns in 2006, both of whom ran unopposed in their previous elections. But the coalition pledged to inform the 75,000 union members residing in the two congressmen’s districts about how their representatives voted and why it will hurt them.

Stansbury also noted that, “there is going to be a real battle in terms of implementing CAFTA. There are some things that are mandated by it, like, when it goes into effect, tariffs will begin to be phased out, but some of the worst aspects of it—like privatization of things like healthcare, water and education—those aren’t set in stone by CAFTA. There’s a lot of ways that we can keep CAFTA an issue, and people in Central America are certainly going to keep fighting it.”



NO TO CAFTA—Nelson Valdez, a VP of SEIU 1199 speaks at press conference at City Hall on August 7. PHOTO: SUSAN CHANELLE

CAFTA Rolls On, But There May Be Bumps Along the Way

The Dominican Republic may be the next country to take up passage of CAFTA. Immediately after it passed in the U.S., Dominican President Leonel Fernandez announced that he was taking steps toward introducing it in the country’s parliament.

The Bush administration’s arm-twisting tactics aren’t limited to the floor of the U.S. House. It sent former U.S. ambassador Oliver Garza to Nicaragua to cut a deal with leaders of the governing Liberal Party. The Liberals are split over the fate of ex-president Arnoldo Aleman, who has been charged with corruption and placed under house arrest. Garza told the pro-Aleman Liberals that the U.S. would no longer push for his prosecution, in exchange for their support of CAFTA. The split within the party had been holding up approval of the treaty. However, the leftist Sandinista party holds the presidency of the Assembly, and they can decide when and if to present CAFTA for a vote, which means that it could be held up there for a while.

CAFTA is considered a step toward the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), which would extend similar economic provisions throughout the hemisphere, from Canada to Chile. The Bush administration has long sought such an agreement. Though CAFTA’s passage is a victory for them, their continued success is by no means a forgone conclusion. Although CAFTA has already passed in El Salvador, a lawsuit challenging its constitutionality has been filed before the Salvadoran Supreme Court. And negotiations for the next step toward the FTAA, the Andean Free Trade Agreement, are uncertain because of the recent uprisings in Ecuador and Bolivia.—SC

THE SPREADING FOOD EMERGENCY IN AFRICA

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.—A new, extremely dangerous crystallization of world affairs is taking place. Its most urgent manifestation is the spreading food emergency in Africa.

Millions of farmers and herders in West Africa — 500,000 in Burkina Faso, 1.1 million in Mali, 750,000 in Mauritania and 1.2 million in Niger — are threatened with hunger, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has warned.

They “lost their livelihoods because of drought and locust invasion” and are living in poverty “with very limited access to food,” FAO said.

The U.N. World Food Program (WFP) began a series of food airlifts to Niger on July 27.

“We are working flat out to deliver rations for some of the worst hunger I have ever witnessed,” said Giancarlo Cirri, WFP Country Director for Niger.

The New York Times published a page-one story on the crisis in Niger Aug. 5, but did not refer to the similarly critical food situations in other African nations. By and large, the mass media are ignoring the emergency.

On June 30, James T. Morris, WFP executive director, reported to the U.N. Security Council: “The greatest humanitarian crisis we face today is not in Darfur (Sudan), Afghanistan or North Korea. It is the gradual disintegration of the social structures in southern Africa and hunger is playing a critical part.”

“A lethal mix of AIDS, recurring drought and failing governance is eroding social and political stability. On average life expectancy has plummeted by 20 years.”

In southern Africa, a total of 8.3 million people are at risk — more than 4 million in Zimbabwe, 1.6 million in Malawi, 1.2 million in Zambia, and 900,000 in Mozambique.

At the same time, the use of food as a weapon persists in Darfur, Morris said. It is

estimated that 3.5 million people there need food aid.

Following Morris’ report, the Council took no action. It failed either to pass a resolution or make a statement on the crisis, as is its custom.

The American public has been similarly unresponsive.

Walking into a New York City supermarket or gourmet food shop, no one would suspect that hundreds of millions worldwide go hungry, malnourished or undernourished.

The United States has an unspoken food policy, which is not designed to feed people.

Western farm subsidies prevent the agricultural products of undeveloped countries from entering world markets (contrary to the propaganda about free trade), and subject those countries to continued poverty and non-development.

These policies are enforced by the US-controlled World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

World briefs

PHILIPPINES PEACE TALKS BREAK DOWN BETWEEN GOV’T & REDS

With Philippine president Gloria Arroyo’s government reeling under strong allegations of election tampering, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, and the associated New People’s Army, have withdrawn from long-standing negotiations. The government responded by saying negotiators’ “safe-conduct” passes were revoked and that leading members of the rebel front were subject to arrest. The rebels’ chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni noted that dozens of left-wing activists have been arrested, tortured and killed over the past several years, leading to a crisis in confidence regarding the talks. “The Arroyo regime’s all-out war policy against the revolutionary forces and the people will only hasten its downfall,” he said.

JESSICA LYNCH: “I WAS USED AS A SYMBOL”

Jessica Lynch, the 22-year-old veteran of the Iraq war and native of Palestine, West Virginia, is still setting the record straight about government dissembling about her rescue from an Iraqi hospital. “I think I provided a way to boost everybody’s confidence about the war,” Lynch told *Time* magazine. “I was used as a symbol. They could show the war was going great because ‘we rescued this person.’ It doesn’t bother me anymore. It used to,” she said.

MAINLINE PROTESTANTS PUSH FOR DIVESTMENT IN ISRAEL

The investment committee of the Presbyterian Church, USA named five U.S. corporations it will push to reform their business dealings with Israel that aid the occupation and illegal settlement of Palestinian lands, including the massive wall Israel is building through the heart of the West Bank. Companies targeted include Caterpillar, which build the armored bulldozers used to demolish Palestinian homes and that killed American solidarity activist Rachel Corrie. The Presbyterian’s investment portfolio is only \$8 million, but the move carries strong symbolic weight. Several other mainline Protestant churches are considering economic sanctions.

PUERTO RICO GOV CALLS MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE CUTS “BENEFITS”

Thousands of Puerto Rican municipal employees are fighting salary and hour cuts by a cash strapped government. AFL-CIO and independent Puerto Rican unions are picketing outside governmental buildings in San Juan demanding no cuts and that the island’s wealthier habitants pay their fair share in taxes. With Bush like logic, Puerto Rican Governor Anibal Acevedo Vilá, calls the employee cuts “benefits” because “necessity is the mother of invention.”

Tariq Ali, prominent British leftist and member of the new Latin American broadcast network Telesur’s advisory board, announced “we have agreed to maintain a separation between the ownership and editorial structures,” allowing the network to be critical of all the region’s governments and resist attempts at censorship. Conceived as a Spanish-language Al Jazeera, Telesur is funded by the governments of Venezuela, Cuba, Chile and Uruguay.

Venceremos Brigade has returned from their 36th trip to Cuba in open defiance of the U.S.-government’s ban on travel to the socialist nation. For two weeks, *brigadistas* helped renovate two elementary

schools in Havana and traveled throughout the island.

U.S. officials in Haiti disclosed that they are arming the military government that overthrew elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide with guns and protest suppression equipment in anticipation of possible upcoming elections. Leaders of the deposed Lavalas Family party have said they will run. Aristide is overwhelmingly popular in Haiti, particularly among the poor, having won 90 percent of the vote in the last election. U.S. soldiers kidnapped him out of the country in the midst of the coup. Aristide loyalists continue resisting in Port-au-Prince.



CHARLES SPRUILL, 16: Watering cabbage and other veggies in the East Farms of New York Project. PHOTO: IRINA IVANOVA

A Growing Movement

NEW YORK CITY'S LOCAL FARMERS DEMOCRATIZE FOOD

BY CHRISTINA ZAWERUCHA
ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY ROBERT BURNS

“It’s worth it,” insists Catalino De Jesus, as he bends over to pick collard greens on the Hilltop Hanover Farm in Yorktown Heights in Westchester early on a damp Saturday morning. Catalino begins his commute from Queens at 5 a.m. to participate in the New Farmer Development Project (NFDP) a 12-week program to teach immigrants how to begin their own small farms and break into the tough Northeast market for fresh, organic produce.

“Many immigrants to this country have farming experience from their homelands, yet have difficulty finding the economic resources to establish their own farms,” explains Maria Alvarez, the project’s coordinator. The project, developed by the Council on the Environment of New York and Greenmarket provides participants with technical information, on when to plant different crops, access to land, and support filling out loan applications.

By training the next generation of regional farmers, NFDP hopes to stem the decline of Northeast farming by preserving farmland, strengthening farmers’ markets, and expanding public access to locally grown products.

Jorge Suerra came to New York from Ecuador with an engineering degree. Though he works during the week at various jobs, the NFDP has made it possible for him to find land to start his own farm next season. “My family had a farm in Ecuador, now I come an hour and a half to start my own, then another hour to Hunts Point to sell in the market,” says Suerra. Sergey Holasko, a participant from last year, commutes every day from Queens to Yorktown Heights, where he has improved a patch of

barren land to harvest produce for his community.

“Everything in the supermarket has pesticides and chemicals that I don’t want to eat. And organic food is expensive!” says Irene Zaluaga, whose family grew fresh vegetables in their garden when they lived in Colombia. “Once, somebody invited me to join a food co-op, but it was still very expensive. The food we grow here is not free; we earn it with our time and energy so we don’t need to think about the money as much.”

“We want to see more development of farms in America. We can’t keep getting our vegetables from California. Look at how high gas prices are now!” exclaims Luz Espinosa, a Colombian grandmother of three who now lives in Queens. “Let’s get families involved! Kids can do more than just play video games. And we need to let politicians know how important fresh vegetables are!”

BLOOMING IN EAST NEW YORK

A passer-by walking beneath the train tracks along Livonia Avenue could hardly believe they’re in Brooklyn. A half-acre of life, laughter, and learning blooms on either side of the road, a part of the East New York Community Center’s East Farms of New York (EFNY) project.

“We’ve essentially created our own market,” explains Georgine Yergey, the project’s coordinator. “First, we asked what does our neighborhood need and what resources do we have to meet these needs?” What the neighborhood needed was a source of fresh foods that were affordable to the community, a space where kids could spend their summer, and physical help for the aging local gardeners in the area.

In 1994, a group of community gardeners decided to reclaim the rat-infested ruins of a group of buildings that had been burned down in the 1977 blackout. Now, 20 youths par-

ticipate in the EFNY seven-month program of planting, harvesting, and selling organic produce in their community.

“We do everything: we plant it harvest it, and sell it, and there’s always something different every week,” explains Khalif Bruce, 15. The participants, 12 to 16 years old, work Tuesday through Thursday at the garden for a small stipend, or are taken by van as needed to help farmers and local elderly gardeners who could use a little extra muscle for their tougher chores. On Fridays, they pick whatever vegetables are ripe, record inventory of their harvest, and on early Saturday mornings they set up and run an entire farmers’ market in East New York. What started out as a single vegetable stand has grown into a full-blown market, with four additional farmers participating.

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets officially recognized the project as a farmer’s market five years ago, qualifying community members for \$2 weekly coupons. The EFNY also just established a beehive from which they have already harvested several pounds of raw honey, and finished constructing a rainwater-collection system that recycles water and reduces polluted runoff into the city’s waterways.

“There’s not much fresh food in the corner store, and a lot of it’s covered in pesticides and herbicides. But what we sell here is cheaper than what they sell in the supermarket, probably because they need to ship it and process it from hundreds of miles away,” says 16-year-old Charles Spruill.

Joemi Regalado happily displays piles of compost. “Worms eat it and well – it’s all doo-doo – but it’s good for you.” Roy Frias, 16, an intern at EFNY for three years, jumps in. “We’re not robbing the garden of any of the nutrients it should have by using chemical fertilizers that leach the soil.”

Some EFNY participants are considering careers in food production and distribution. Warren Ottey, 14, who will begin attending Port Richmond High School’s culinary program in the fall, runs the market’s Community Supported Agriculture table. “I manage the money, make sure customers pick up their shares, I pay the farmers and take care of receipts.” In between sharing his recipes for tat soi and bok choy greens, Ottey lays out his plans to start his own business and appear on the popular Food Channel TV show, “Recipe for Success”: “You better believe that I’m going to order all of my vegetables from a garden like this one.”



KHALIF BRUCE, 15 gets his hands dirty. PHOTO: IRINA IVANOVA

Groceries in the Garbage

BY JAY BACHHUBER

New York is a city where thousands of people go hungry every day, while trash bags bulge with uneaten and unspoiled food. According to a 2000 waste composition analysis, New Yorkers produce more than 400,000 tons of food waste a year, even while 480,000 people need food assistance every day. The city spends up to \$71.38 per ton to ship its solid waste to landfills in Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania, placing a huge burden on taxpayers.

University of Arizona anthropologist Timothy Jones, who has studied U.S. food loss

over the past ten years, estimates that the average household wastes 14 percent of its food purchases. Fifteen percent of that waste consists of products still within their expiration dates. According to Jones’s calculations, the average American family discards \$590 in foodstuffs per year, often when it could have been frozen and saved.

School cafeterias are also significant sources of waste. A New York State Department of Environmental Conservation study concluded that students produce between 45 and 90 pounds of garbage a year from school lunches, much of which is uneaten food. In an article on youthcomm.org, student Kenneth Douglas wrote of classmates drinking the milk from lunch trays and throwing away the rest because they believed “that ‘People who would eat this stuff must not have any food at home,’ and, ‘You must be poor if

you’re eating that stuff.’”

Regulations for the National School Lunch Program require students to receive a set number of items, whether they want them or not. A March 2005 survey showed that 74 percent of urban schools do nothing to limit waste from unfinished meals. About \$600 million worth of food from school lunches is thrown away every year nationwide, according to a federal Department of Agriculture study.

There are people working against this flood of squandered nourishment. Organizations such as Wastefreelunches.org teach ways to reduce lunch waste. While focusing on reducing school-lunch packaging, they also encourage parents to pack lunch boxes more efficiently and stress the need for composting programs at schools. In California, school composting and recycling projects have saved thousands of dol-

lars and thousands of pounds of garbage.

Locally, the Lower East Side Ecology Center converts 60 tons of organic waste into roughly 15 tons of compost every year. NYCWasteLe\$\$, an initiative by the city Department of Sanitation, maintains a Web site designed to help New Yorkers decrease the amount of garbage they produce and dispose of it more effectively. NYCWasteLe\$\$ explains how consumers and businesses can save money and reduce waste through more efficient food purchasing, preparation and storage, by composting, and by redistributing their potential food waste to soup kitchens and food pantries.

Since 1981, City Harvest has been a link between those who have and those who have not. With its fleet of 18 trucks, City Harvest works with more than 2,600 local businesses to save more than 19 million pounds of food a year by delivering food to pantries and soup

DINING in BABYLON



BY NICHOLAS POWERS

Do we eat just to eat? Or do we consume more than food when we eat? During the Holocaust, starving inmates of concentration camps waited before meals. As hunger tightened skin around bone, they set a table and served each other the thin soup because to fight for food was to lose the last remnant of one's humanity.

More important than the food was the ceremony of eating. It reminded the inmates that they were not the animals of Nazi rhetoric but a people with memory and tradition.

In New York the language of food is also the language of war because it reflects a city caught in class struggle. Winners and losers eat differently even though they're separated by few streets, as, for example, from Bed-Stuy to Fort Greene.

Restaurants are rare in the 'hood. More common is the bare cafeteria style of fast food chains or bodegas. You order, pick up and go. My first stop was the McDonald's on Fulton where a dead-eyed cashier took orders. Workers rolled weariness across their shoulders as if it was easier to bear if set to a rhythm.

Next I went to a Muslim Halal buffet. Halal restaurants promise godly food, cooked according to scripture. It's not just food but a sign of divine trust. A TV tuned to Al Jazeera flashed images of a U.S. tank aiming its canon at protesters, of Arab-Muslim men yanking at the fence of the refugee camp they were confined in.

I left the Halal restaurant and walked past the African Bistro on Fulton — it was the first restaurant I saw with candles on the tables. In the 19th Century, agents of the Underground Railroad put candles in windows to signal it was a safe house to runaway slaves. So when I see candles, I follow them. I walked past it to

kitchens. The group recently established a free produce market in the South Bronx for residents of the Melrose Houses.

Other New Yorkers deal with food waste by dumpster diving. Some "freegans" are driven to consume food that has been thrown out by restaurants, grocers and delis because they cannot afford to buy food; others choose it as a statement against consumerism and for environmentalism. By eating perfectly edible and nutritious food that has left the commercial production-consumption cycle, freegans claim to be withdrawing from the environmental destruction wrought by the food industry. By consuming what would otherwise be wasted, they reduce the amount of trash going to landfills. Dumpster diving may be abhorrent to most people, but freegans argue that rampant consumer overindulgence is worse.

Outpost Cafe, Kush and then Bodegas in Clinton Hill, going from one fire-lit restaurant after another to reach the Promised Land of middle-class America.

As I passed them, I noticed that fine restaurants feed our desire to be special, to deserve what others don't or cannot get. It's not about food but art like the smile of the waiter, and the menu with adjectives braided into long descriptive sentences. It read of grilled marinated glazed honey dipped French slow simmered fresh organic dinners tailored to your tongue.

Fine restaurants are where one goes for an education in class because you learn how to be obeyed, how to want, how to act and how to sharpen your taste.

Finally I reached Fort Greene's Havana Outpost, a nostalgic Cuban-themed restaurant with a bright green fence laced with barbed wire. A battered van in the back was converted into an outdoor kitchen where sweaty Mexican cooks called out names and handed out food. It was a return to Bed-Stuy's cafeteria-style eating but with the twist of Third World kitsch. Here signs of government repression and poverty are pricey First World decor. Here the inmates are aspiring middle-class blacks, home-owning whites and artists eating salty rice and beans off paper plates to taste authenticity.

The owner set up a projector to show Spike Lee's classic movie *Do the Right Thing* on the wall of the next building. The movie isn't just entertainment but our mythology of Brooklyn. So when Buggin' Out demanded Sal put photos of blacks on his wall of fame, the black man at the table with me pointed to Not Ray's Pizza across the street and said, "That's the Sal's of this neighborhood."

I glanced at Not Ray's Pizza and thought, no, it's not because this is not the Brooklyn and we are not the blacks of *Do the Right Thing*. Gentrification had long since pushed the poor down Fulton. We were solid middle class or with enough money to pretend. We were a polite inter-racial audience, laughing at a movie critical of gentrification because we benefited from it. Unlike inmates in other places, also surrounded by a barbed-wire fence, we did not want to escape.

FOOD PACKAGING WASTE

Americans spent \$100 billion on packaging in 1997, of which 17 percent was beverage containers and 32 percent was food packaging.

- >> Anything between 10% and 50% of the price of food today is its packaging.
- >> Americans throw out 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour.
- >> Carbonated beverages, fatty foods and heated liquids cause plasticizers, chemicals used to soften plastic for molding which disrupt the endocrine system, to leech from the packaging and be ingested.
- >> The number of plastic soda bottles discarded by Americans doubled from 1994 to 1998, increasing from 7.6 billion to 15.1 billion.
- >> Americans throw out 45 billion aluminum cans a year
- >> The energy needed to replace the aluminum beverage cans thrown away in 2000 could have generated enough electricity to supply 2.5 million U.S. homes for a year.
- >> New Yorkers threw out 37,990 tons of disposable plates and cups in 2000

—JB

SOURCES: Reed Exhibition Companies study; The site.org; The Problem of Plastics in Haiti: Impacts on Human and Environmental Health in Production, Use and Disposal and Globalization and Waste: Solutions for Communities; Timothy J. Krupnik, Recycling Department, Berkeley Ecology Center; Container Recycling Institute; 2000 NYC Waste Analysis Survey

VENDORS ON THE LAM



RED HOOK HOME COOKING: The city requires all cooking to be done on a cart.

PHOTO: MACIEJ CEGLOWSKI

BY ANDREW SILVERSTEIN

On a warm spring night in Jackson Heights, an older Mexican vendor was filling an order of five elotes — fresh corn lathered in mayonnaise, covered in cotija cheese and dusted with a hot pepper powder. While he pulled the third corncob from a large pot in the shopping cart equipped with all his ingredients, a fellow vendor whistled, alerting him to an approaching police officer. In a panic, he covered his cart, pushed it against a wall and told his three customers to come back in five minutes. He then ran into a convenience store.

If the police had found his cart they would have likely thrown it to the curb. If they had found him, the vendor, who did not give his name, reluctantly guessed that it would mean "a fine or even an arrest."

Within five minutes all three customers and the vendor had returned to the cart. For two of them, the corn is a taste of home, Mexico, and for the third it is a sweet, hot and crunchy taste you cannot find in a restaurant. Laughing at how selling corn has become a criminal act, one customer stood watch. The vendor, however, did not seem to appreciate the irony of the situation; he worked fast, constantly scanning Roosevelt Avenue for police.

This is a scene from many immigrant neighborhoods across New York City. Customers, neighbors and fellow vendors serve as lookouts as corn is pulled from shopping carts, beverages are poured from coolers, and sandwiches appear from duffel bags.

Sean Basinski, a lawyer and head of the Street Vendor Project advocacy group, estimates there are 5,000 unlicensed vendors operating in the city. Without any official statistics, Basinski guesses that perhaps half are food vendors.

The city issues only 3,100 mobile food vending permits a year, with an additional 1,000 in the summer. Basinski says that the average wait for a cart permit can be 10 years, and at the very least three to four, depending on a lottery. He himself waited two years for his own cart permit.

The Street Vendor Project sees the limited number of permits, and confusing and contradictory laws as unnecessary harassment of honest and hardworking people, who are mainly recent immigrants and people of color.

The city claims the restricted number of permits and its regulations are necessary to ensure public health and safety. Joyce Hernandez Lopez, press secretary for the City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, says the city makes its best efforts

to work with immigrant vendors, offering the vendors a license course in Spanish and Chinese, in addition to translating material into additional languages.

Even if a permit is obtained, street food vendors are not necessarily free and clear. Pedro, an immigrant from Colombia, has prepared avena, an oatmeal-based drink, at his home and sold it on the street for the past year. He brags, "This is just how Columbians make it in their homes."

Yessica, an immigrant from Colombia, agrees. "It's like a taste of my mother's kitchen." To many this home-style cooking is the appeal of street food.

The city, however, requires that all cooking be done on a cart or in a commercial establishment. Basinski claims the city makes exceptions to its home-cooking regulations. "They allow it at farmers' markets where people are generally white and rural, but vendors who are mainly immigrants cannot [get exceptions]."

This is an example, he contends, of "the racist underpinnings of the city's policies." He believes the city makes unfair assumptions about immigrant vendors and how they prepare food.

History shows that such prejudices run deep in New York. In 1938 Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia banned vendors from the streets, citing the desire to alleviate congestion and promote safety. Suzanne Wasserman, associate director of the Gotham Center of New York History at the City University of New York Graduate Center, asserts that LaGuardia's policies were part of a "de-ethnicization" project on the Lower East Side.

LaGuardia wished to push the vendors from the streets into "modern" indoor markets at Essex Street and LaMarqueta, claiming to change "peddlers into merchants."

Mayors have continued to tighten vending restrictions. Limits imposed in 1979 and 1983 dropped food-vending permits from 12,000 to 3,000. In recent years vendors have been increasingly affected by strong enforcement of "Quality of Life" crimes.

Recently, politicians and business leaders in Bay Ridge held a press conference to promote a ban of vendors on 86th Street. According to the *New York Daily News*, "local business leaders said vendors would clog local streets and drive out small business owners."

Many anti-vendor attitudes based on class and cultural differences also still exist. The *Daily News* quoted Cristyne Nicholas, president of NYC & Co., the city's official tourism bureau, commenting on an influx of vendors to Times Square. "Right now," she said, "Times Square could be mistaken for a Third World bazaar."



BEEF

WATER

Water required to produce one pound of U.S. beef: 2,500 gallons

HORMONES, ANTIBIOTICS

Most traditionally raised beef calves go from 80 pounds to 1,200 pounds in a period of about 14 months... calves are fed or implanted with various drugs and hormones to, as the beef industry says, "promote efficient growth."

Any combination of the natural hormones estradiol, progesterone, and testosterone, and the synthetic hormones zeranol and trenbolone acetate may be given to cattle. Another hormone, melengesterol acetate, may also be added to feed to "improve weight gain and feed efficiency."

Along with antibiotics, traditionally raised cattle are given various vaccines and other drugs.

FEED

A steer in a feedlot will eat 2,000 pounds of grain just to put on 400 pounds of weight, producing 50 pounds of manure a day.

Cattle are not just fed high-protein diets. Many other substances are passed off as "feed."

"A plethora of substances found their way into animal feed... Slaughterhouses and tanneries provided blood, entrails, hoofs, bristles, and feathers for use in animal feed. Some alternative substances were... industrial wastes such as sawdust, wood chips, twigs, and even ground-up newspapers and cardboard boxes. Others were cement dust from kilns, sludge from municipal composting plants, water from electric generating plants that used fluidized bed combustion of coal, and waste water from nuclear power stations..." The Four Ds — dead, dying, disabled, and diseased animals — moisture-damaged or maggot-infested grains; foods contaminated by rodents, roaches, or bird excreta."



BASIC STATS

> Per capita consumption in the U.S. for beef was 62 lbs. in 2003.

> Retail equivalent value of U.S. beef industry in 2004:\$79 billion

> U.S. commercial slaughter in 2004: 32.728 million head (27 million steers and heifers and 5.2 million cull beef and dairy cows)

BEEF PRODUCERS

830,880 farms raised almost sixty million cattle for commercial sale in 2000.

During the first week of their lives they [male calves] are usually castrated and have their horn buds chemically burnt out. They are not adequately protected against inclement weather, and they may die of dehydration or freeze to death. Injured, ill, or otherwise ailing animals do not receive necessary veterinary attention.



ENERGY

Meat requires much more fossil fuel to produce than vegetables and grains; about 290 times more for beef than for potatoes. The reason for this is simple: cattle consume 14 times more grain by weight than they produce as meat.

TRANSPORT

During transportation, cattle are crowded into metal trucks where they suffer from trampling, temperature extremes, and lack of food, water and veterinary care.

STOCKERS

Each year, over 76 percent of all beef calves born in the U.S. will be grazed on pasture as stocker calves for 60 to 140 days after weaning but before entering a feedlot for finishing.

FEEDLOTS

Feedlots are confinement facilities where young cattle are fed large amounts of grain in order to reach slaughter weight. Eighty-one percent of cattle are fed in feedlots with a capacity of eight thousand or more animals. Of the 2,071 feedlots in the U.S., just 20 feed roughly half of all market calves. Three of the top five feedlot firms are part of large, vertically-integrated corporations that also own processing facilities.

PROCESSORS

The top four beef processing firms control 79 percent of the beef-processing market. Slaughterhouses have become a vector for food-borne illnesses, largely because of speed-ups that involve the largest plants slaughtering 400 cattle an hour and an inspection process that relies largely on company self-policing and reporting. Processing plants employ 147,000 workers in jobs that have been largely deskilled. Turnover at plants is often 100 percent or more annually and some 27 percent of workers suffer job-related injuries or illnesses. Food-borne illnesses from throughout the meatpacking and processing industry kill 5,000 people each year in the U.S. Another 325,000 are hospitalized.

RETAILERS

McDonald's relies on just five meatpackers for its hamburger supply. One of the largest suppliers is Keystone Foods, which owns meatpacking company Shapiro Packing. "Government inspectors have cited Shapiro hundreds of times for a variety of safety violations." Inspectors' reports stand out for the frequent recurrence of feces contamination.

FAST FOOD END USE

McDonald's 1996 beef usage exceeded 644 million pounds, approximately 2.5 percent of total United States production.

One of five meals in the U.S. is a fast-food meal.

HAMBURGER BUNS ARE BIG BUSINESS IN COMMERCIAL BAKERIES.

Fast Food corporations demand buns with evenly distributed sesame seeds and uniform color, size and texture. High-tech in-line quality assurance systems identify out-of-spec product and either suggest or automatically make adjustments. Engineers have developed systems incorporating machine vision, logarithmic computations and intelligent controls that communicate with ovens, proofers, depositors and other upstream equipment when products begin drifting out of spec.

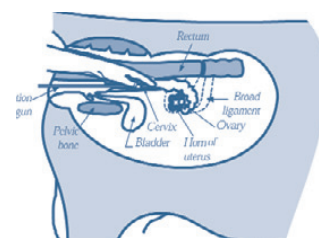
GENETIC ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRIAL BAKING:

In order to decrease the time it takes to make bread, some enzymes are genetically modified to improve their reactivity. Recently there have been moves to breed strains of wheat that work more effectively with the industrial baking process. Because these modified enzymes are classified as baking aids they needn't be declared on the labelling of the bread.

CHEESE

BREEDING

As of 1996 about two-thirds of dairy cattle in the United States were artificially inseminated. Instead of observing cows to determine when they are in heat, many dairy farmers use heat synchronization. "Synchronization of heat... involves getting cows and heifers in heat so that they can be inseminated at the same time. However it requires the use of drugs, veterinary supervision and sometimes increased semen usage. Two different drugs are used to synchronize heat, prostaglandin and progesterone."



MILK PREPARATION

First, the milk is homogenized to ensure a constant fat level. A standardizing centrifuge, which skims off the surplus fat as cream, is often used to obtain the fat levels appropriate for different varieties of cheese. Following homogenization, the milk is pasteurized.

PROCESSING

Processed cheese is made from natural cheese, and American cheese comes from Cheddar and Colby cheeses. The modern manufacture of natural cheese consists of four basic steps: coagulating, draining, salting, and ripening.

Rennet is the enzyme most often used to coagulate milk and comes from the fourth stomach of calves. Coagulation leads to the separation of the solid part of milk (the curd) from the liquid part (the whey). Processed cheese is made by first cleaning cheese surfaces. Cheese blocks are then ground in massive grinders, combined, and heated, causing it to separate into a fat and protein. Emulsifiers are added to disperse the fat, along with salt and food coloring, creating a uniform, homogenous mass.

The molten cheese is removed quickly from the cookers and is pumped or dropped into packaging hoppers. For sliced processed cheese, the molten cheese is spread uniformly by chilled steel rollers and cut by rotary knives to consumer size.

CHEESE FACTORIES

Total U.S. cheese production in 2004 was 8.876 billion pounds. In 1995, there were 432 factories producing cheese, and 99.5 percent of cheese eaten is produced domestically.

CHEESE SUPPLIERS

Kraft Accounts for 55 percent of processed cheese sales. Kraft Foods and Schreiber foods supply most of McDonald's special blend of pasteurized American cheese.

DISTRIBUTION

McDonald's "tempers" the cheese for its hamburgers—leaving it out for 6 to 24 hours—to acquire the proper melting characteristics. Scientists determined that of four pathogens, none would grow on McDonald's cheese in a 24-hour period at a holding temperature of 86 degrees.

CONSUMPTION

In 2003, Americans consumed 31 pounds of cheese per person, more than twice as much as they did in 1975. Convenience foods are a major force behind growing cheese consumption. About 55 percent to 65 percent of our cheese now comes in commercially manufactured and prepared foods, such as fast food sandwiches and packaged snack foods.



The ANATOMY of a FAST-FOOD MEAL

Nothing is simpler, more American or, to millions, more satisfying than a burger, fries and a soda. It's the quintessential comfort food, but it's also the result of high-tech research labs, secretive corporations and medieval production methods. Here, we investigate the "commodity chains" for beef, cheese, potatoes and wheat, showing the steps in the farming, production, processing and distribution of the items that make up the most popular meal in America.

BY A.K. GUPTA AND CHRISTINA ZAWERUCHA / ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRANK REYNOSO

INDUSTRIAL BAKING

Wheat flour is mixed with water, yeast, soya flour, fat, baking aids and ascorbic acid (E300) in large drums. Violent mixing, assisted by E300, releases the gluten in the wheat very quickly and produces a stiff dough in a fraction of the time of craft bakeries.

Hydrogenated or fractionated oil works with gluten to create a stiff dough that rises rapidly and retains its structure during baking and cooling. E471 or E472s Emulsifiers are added to the mix to make the fats bond to the wet flours. About 5 grams of salt are added per kilo of dough as a flavor enhancer, improving the otherwise bland taste of industrial bread.

The anti-molding agent calcium propionate is dusted onto the loaves as they cool. Although calcium propionate use has been linked to allergic reactions in bakery workers, the agent is classed as a "baking aid" and does not need to be declared on packaging.

NUTRIENTS AND INDUSTRIAL BAKING

Industrial bread is lower in vitamins than bread produced by traditional milling and baking methods, because the smashing of starch molecules, the rolling and the heating caused by the compression of grain in industrial baking breaks down the grain's essential nutrients. Certain vitamins and minerals are added to enrich all flour.

Nutritional content of white and wholemeal flour:

| | White | Wholemeal |
|-------------------------|-------|-----------|
| Protein | 2.3% | 3.1% |
| Fats | 0.2% | 0.6% |
| Carbohydrates | 15.6% | 11.2% |
| Iron | 0.4% | 0.7% |
| Thiamine (vitamin B1) | 0.01% | 0.09% |
| Riboflavin (vitamin B2) | 0.01% | 0.05% |
| Nicotinic acid | 0.2% | 0.6% |

INDUSTRIAL MILLING

High speed milling breaks down the starch molecules in the wheat so that they can be more quickly acted upon by yeast. The finished flour flows through a device that releases a bleaching-maturing agent (chlorine gas or benzoyl peroxide) to whiten flour. The flour stream passes through another device that enriches the flour with thiamin, niacin and riboflavin, iron and folic acid.

INPUTS PER ACRE

Nitrogen Fertilizer: 32.5-115 lbs/acre
Phosphate fertilizer: 11.1-35.1 lbs/acre
Potash fertilizer: 6-10 lbs/acre
Wheat Herbicides: 2,4-D; 2,4-D, Dimethyl salt; 2,4-DP, Dimethyl salt; Acetic acid (2,4-D); Bromoxynil; Bromoxynil octanoate; Butoxy ester 2,4-D; Clodinafop-propargil; Clopyralid; Dicamba; Sodium salt; Fenoxaprop; Flucarbazone-sodium; Fluoroxypyr; Fluoroxypyr 1-methyl; Glyphosate; Glyphosate diam salt; MCPA; MCPA, dimethyl salt; MCPA-EHE; Metsulfuron-methyl; Sulfosate; Thifen-sulfuron; Triallate; Triasulfuron; Tribenuron-methyl; Trifluralin.

IDAHO POTATO FARMING

5,000 U.S. growers cultivate 1.27 million acres of potatoes with an annual yield of 45.78 billion pounds. Thirty percent of that is used for french fries — the most popular restaurant item. More than 10,000 varieties of potatoes grow throughout the Americas, but 55 percent of U.S. potatoes are Russet Burbank.

GENETIC ENGINEERING

In April 2000, it was widely reported that McDonald's told its suppliers to stop using genetically modified potatoes like Monsanto's "NewLeaf," which produces its own insecticide and is registered as a pesticide with the Environmental Protection Agency. A spokesman for fry-maker J.R. Simplot Co. attributed this to "extreme environmental groups and anti-technology groups." Meanwhile, the fast-food giant cooks its fries in oil from genetically altered corn and soybeans.

PRECISION FARMING

"Precision farming" using technology from military contractors like Rockwell and Lockheed Martin is being promoted in many agricultural sectors including potato farming. It makes farmers "depend on off-farm decision making to... dictat[e] what seed, fertilizer, chemicals, row spacing, irrigation and harvesting techniques are used." The high-tech tool increases commodification and control of information, driving the industrialization of agriculture and eroding local farm knowledge and farmers' rights.

HARVESTING

Harvesting involves the use of "vine desiccants," "enabling more efficient movement of machinery and more efficient harvest in the absence of green vines." Active ingredients include diquat dibromide, endothal, sodium chlorate and sulfuric acid.

FRENCH FRY SUPPLIERS

Simplot supplies about half the fries McDonald's sells in the United States. Simplot, Lamb Weston and McCain control about 80 percent of the U.S. market. Besides growing its own, Simplot contracts with more than 1,000 U.S. potato growers producing over 100,000 acres.

FLAVOR INDUSTRY

McDonald's fries get their distinct taste via the highly secretive "flavor industry," the heart of which is along the New Jersey Turnpike. The flavor of a TV dinner and shaving cream scents use the same basic science. There are only six basic tastes but thousands of different chemical aromas. After promoting its fries as vegetarian for years, McDonald's admitted in 2001 it uses "a minuscule amount of beef flavoring."

PESTICIDES

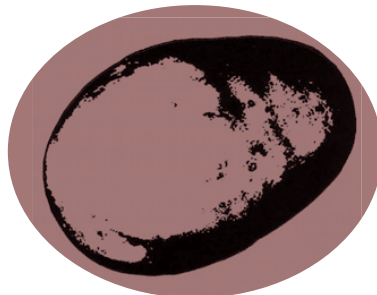
In the state of Montana alone, durum wheat farmers applied a total of 236,000 lbs. of pesticide.

MONSANTO

About 70 percent of GE crops grown worldwide derive from Monsanto technology. Monsanto is responsible for Agent Orange, Round-up Ready soy, corn, and cotton, as well as Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone. 60-63 million acres of wheat are harvested each year, an amount 1/3 the size of Texas.

Wheat is the principle cereal grain grown in the U.S., ranking 4th in volume of crop production and first in volume of crop export.

In 2001, lower wheat prices drove farmers to harvest only 48,653,000 acres, yielding two billion bushels, worth \$5.5 billion.



POTATOES



PESTICIDES

Potato growing in the Northwest accounts for more than half the national total and 80 percent of pesticide use on potatoes. The EPA classifies 14 of 41 common potato pesticides as carcinogens; 83 percent of potatoes in one EPA test were contaminated. In 1996, Idaho potato growers used 31.59 million pounds of pesticides — almost 80 pounds per acre. Fifteen pesticides (four of them used on potatoes) were detected in groundwater in south-central Idaho. "Seed pieces should be treated with a... fungicide such as Maneb, Mancozeb, Thiabendazole or Thiofanate-methyl immediately after cutting."

FERTILIZERS AND MICRONUTRIENTS

Depending on soil nutrient levels and yield sought, the University of Idaho recommends 100-320 pounds of nitrogen fertilizer, up to 440 pounds of phosphorus and up to 700 pounds of potassium per acre for the Russet Burbank. In 1993, Idaho potato growers averaged 237 pounds of nitrogen fertilizer per acre.

Oregon State University recommends up to 2 tons of lime, which adds calcium and magnesium, per acre. Other micronutrients that may be required include sulfur, zinc, manganese, iron, copper and boron.

IRRIGATION

Weekly water usage during the Idaho growing season ranges from 1.7 to 2.4 acre-inches (27,154 gallons), meaning 1 acre of potatoes uses 55,000 to 60,000 gallons of water per week for three to four months. "Reduced water flow in Minnesota's Straight River during pumping season is largely due to wells that feed a 7,500-acre farm owned by R.D. Offutt Co. — the nation's largest potato grower. Each year a nearby Offutt processing plant uses an additional 600 million gallons of groundwater turning 1 billion pounds of potatoes into 500 million pounds of fries."

WHEAT



Some Pig!™

MONSANTO SEEKS PATENTS ON BREEDING HERDS OF PIGS



BY BRIAN THOMAS FITZGERALD

It's official. Monsanto Corporation is out to corner the world's food supply as they pig-headedly set about hog-tying farmers with their monopoly plans. Not content to control the patents on pesticides, herbicides and genetically modified seeds, the corporate giant has made a move toward the barnyard in an attempt to own that most famous Monsanto invention – the pig.

Christoph Then, a Greenpeace researcher who monitors patent applications, recently uncovered a move by the multinational corporation to patent not only certain methods of breeding, but also the resulting herds of pigs themselves. The patent applications were published in February of 2005 by the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva.

"If these patents are granted, Monsanto can legally prevent breeders and farmers from breeding pigs whose characteristics are described in the patent claims, or force them to pay royalties," said Then. "It's a first step toward the same kind of corporate control of an animal line that Monsanto is aggressively pursuing with various grain and vegetable lines."

Various parts of the applications rely on phrases such as "a pig offspring," "a pig herd," "a pig population" and "a swine herd" in describing what the company is attempting to patent. Should the applications be approved, the requests would essentially give ownership of the pigs, their offspring and the use of their genetic information for breeding purposes to Monsanto. Aside from fines, infringement of the patent could even result in imprisonment for offenders.

"Monsanto isn't just seeking a patent for the method, they are seeking a patent on the actual pigs which are bred from this method," said Then. "It's an astoundingly broad and dangerous claim."

Other portions of the patent are vague in description. In one patent application Monsanto describes very general methods of crossbreeding and selection that rely on artificial insemination and other breeding methods already in use. The main "invention" is nothing more than a particular combination of these elements designed to speed the breeding cycle for specific traits.

Monsanto hopes to use such methods to make the animals more commercially profitable. The multinational notes that, "The economic impact of the industry in rural America is immense. Annual farm sales typically exceed US\$1 billion, while the retail value of pork sold to consumers reaches US\$38 billion each year."

In the last ten years Monsanto has spent about \$10 billion buying up seed producers and companies in other sectors of the agricultural business. By claiming global monopoly patent rights throughout the entire food chain, Monsanto seeks to make farmers and food producers, and ultimately consumers, entirely dependent and reliant on one single corporate entity for a basic human need.



PHOTOGRAPHER SHARAD HAKSAR'S billboard in Chennai, one of India's largest cities, which displayed the familiar red Coca-Cola logo painted on a wall in the background of a photograph depicting water scarcity. *PHOTO: SHARAD HAKSAR*

INCALCULABLE DAMAGE

Coca-Cola's Operations in India

BY DIANE MASON

In July, the Coca-Cola Company threatened to sue award-winning Indian photographer Sharad Haksar for causing "incalculable damage" to its goodwill and reputation. Haksar had placed a giant billboard in Chennai, one of India's largest cities, which displayed the Coca-Cola logo painted on a wall in the background of a photograph depicting water scarcity. The photographer claimed his work was "solely an expression of creativity." Coca-Cola demanded that he remove the billboard and make an unconditional apology. He has refused.

According to anti-Coke activist Vandana Shiva, Coca-Cola was forced out of India in 1977, but returned in 1993 with the arrival of Pepsi. Today Coca-Cola owns 52 factories throughout the country, and Pepsi has 38. Combined, these plants remove more than 1.5 million liters of clean water a day from the ground.

The India Resource Center says that communities living around Coke's bottling facilities are facing severe hardships. Those affected

"are also some of the most marginalized communities in India – indigenous people, lower castes, low-income and agricultural day laborers." Water scarcity and polluted soil and water created by Coke, the center adds, have directly resulted in crop failures, leading to a loss of livelihood for thousands.

In the village of Plachimada in the southern state of Kerala, where Coke opened a plant in 2000, the company drilled more than six wells and illegally installed high-powered electric pumps to extract millions of liters of pure water, according to Shiva. The level of the water table fell by 105 meters. The company then polluted the rest of the community's water supply by dumping waste that spread into rice paddies, canals and wells. When Coke abandoned this practice, it began pumping dirty water into dry boreholes that had been drilled on-site for the disposal of solid waste – contaminating the aquifers, causing serious damage to harvests and also affecting navigable waterways. As the water supply deteriorated, the local tribal women had to travel miles to fetch potable water.

This part of Kerala is known as the rice bowl of India, but agricultural yields have plummeted. Worse, says Shiva, Coke has been distributing its toxic waste to local farmers as free fertilizer, which has created a public-health nightmare.

When Coke refused to account for its practices, the village council withdrew the company's operating license. "But the loss of the license did not cost them the support of the state government," explains Shiva, "which awarded the multinational giant a subsidy of two million rupees.... Pepsi and Coca-Cola have secured similar grants in all the Indian states where they have set up factories."

Coca-Cola made extravagant promises to residents of Plachimada about employment and wage opportunities. But according to ActionAid, fewer than 400 residents were employed at the local bottling plant, whereas thousands of people had worked on the now-polluted land in what so recently had been a prosperous farming area. *Green Left Weekly* noted that Coca-Cola generated income of

PLAYING HARDBALL AGAINST SOFT DRINKS

Campaign to Make Coke Accountable for Crimes in Colombia Gaining Wide Support

The Campaign to Stop Killer Coke is a global movement that seeks to hold the Coca-Cola Company accountable for its gross human rights abuses in Colombia, to educate the public about Coke's crimes worldwide and to give support to others in their struggles against the beverage giant. Coke is implicated in the kidnapping, torture and murder of union organizers at their bottling plants in Colombia. These crimes echo a similar pattern of intimidation by the company in Guatemala in the '70s and '80s.

As a result of the work of the NYC-based Corporate Campaign, Inc./Campaign to Stop Killer Coke, the sale and marketing of Coke products has been banned from colleges and universities in the U.S., Canada and Europe, including Rutgers University, with NYU expected to follow. The group has also won the support of major labor unions, including the Service Employees International Union and the New York State United Teachers, as well as the Union Theological Seminary. Ray Rogers, the campaign's director, was the recent focus of a segment on "WB11 News at Ten" that reported the conclusion of City Councilman Hiram Monserrate's Columbian investigation – that Coke is indeed complicit in the alleged abuses. —Diane Mason

For more information, visit www.killercoke.org

more than 10 million rupees every day, but spent less than 25,000 rupees on production, including wages and transportation.

A massive grassroots movement has emerged to hold Coca-Cola accountable for its crimes, and tens of thousands of people, primarily from rural India, are taking action to put an end to its abuses. Since 2002, residents of Plachimada have been on vigil 24 hours a day outside the gates of Coca-Cola's local bottling plant. At Coke's bottling facility near Jaipur, the sinking water table has created water shortages for over 50 villages, and more than 2,000 people marched last summer in protest. Over 7,000 people in Tamil Nadu turned out to protest a proposed Coca-Cola factory in their village.

In July, the state government of Kerala announced that it would take Coca-Cola to court over its abuse of groundwater, challenging an earlier decision by the state High Court.

While Coke has attributed activist actions to "a handful of extremists," the resistance has periodically faced violent reactions by authorities. A peaceful protest outside a Coca-Cola plant in Mehdiganj ended when 1,000 demonstrators were attacked and injured by police and armed guards.

"Coca-Cola is stealing our water and our land and getting away with it legally. And they are calling our struggle for our livelihoods, our existence, illegal," said Nandlal Master, one of the organizers from Lok So and the National Alliance of People's Movements. "We do not accept this, and our struggle will prevail."

For more info visit: www.indiaresource.org

How long does it take employees at McDonald's restaurants in the Asia-Pacific region to earn enough money to purchase a Big Mac at their own place of work?

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Australia: | 17 minutes |
| New Zealand: | 28 minutes |
| Hong Kong: | 41 minutes |
| Malaysia: | 1 hour, 26 minutes |
| South Korea: | 1 hour, 29 minutes |
| Philippines: | 2 hours, 19 minutes |
| Thailand: | 2 hours, 45 minutes |
| China: | 3 hours, 58 minutes |
| Sri Lanka: | 5 hours, 53 minutes |
| India: | 8 hours, 34 minutes |

and the winner is...Pakistan, where it takes a McDonald's worker 14 hours, 14 minutes to buy a lousy burger.

Source: www.asianlabour.org

Some of the major brands manufactured and/or distributed by The Coca-Cola Company besides its Coke products:



Be Part of the Solution

CONSUMPTION AND FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS IN N.Y.C.

BY CHRISTINA ZAWERUCHA

Overworked, underpaid, and exhausted, millions of New Yorkers invariably begin their day with a substantial cup of coffee, yet few of us recognize the conditions and systems that provide this beverage.

Global overproduction of this commodity has skyrocketed in response to structural adjustment policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Latin American and Southeast Asian countries. Those policies have resulted in a significant decline in coffee prices over the past 10 years.

Specialty coffees, for example, have lost more than half their price per pound since 1998. According to Oxfam USA, coffee farmers receive 21 cents for each pound they produce, while a living wage would be around \$1.96 per pound. Major brands of coffee such as Folgers, Kraft, and Nestle sell the coffee for about \$1.44/lb. wholesale and \$3.96/lb. retail. These players have done nothing to acknowledge the poverty they foster.

With "fair trade" coffee, growers receive \$1.96 for a pound of coffee. The middlemen, monitored by Transfair USA, willingly accrue a lower profit margin, and shoppers pay a little extra. Starbucks has acceded to activist pressure and offers a fair-trade line of coffee, but it is not available by the cup. (It also seems counterproductive to buy fair-trade coffee from a company that otherwise exploits its workers.)



Here are a few New York businesses where you can purchase fair-trade coffee to start your day off right:

- Apple Restaurant
17 Waverly Place
- Bluestockings,
172 Allen St. (@ Stanton)
- Bright Food Shop
216 Eighth Ave.
- Empire Coffee & Tea
568 Ninth Ave.

THE COST OF COCOA

One of America's favorite comfort drinks offers little comfort to child slaves in the Ivory Coast region of Africa.

In countries such as Ghana, where 40 percent of export revenues come from the sale of cocoa, farmers receive about one cent for every 60-cent chocolate bar sold in the U.S. The difficulty of making a living in cocoa farming has generated a child-labor market, using kids from neighboring Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Togo.

As it takes 400 cocoa pods to produce just one pound of chocolate, children and other workers are forced to work long days picking and processing cocoa beans, making school attendance impossible.

Many children go through life harvesting cocoa without ever tasting chocolate, which they cannot afford on their meager wages. Fair-trade chocolate may cost a little more, but it is produced without child labor, and with higher wages. Mars, Hershey, and every other major chocolate manufacturer have failed to make a commitment to producing fair-trade chocolate.

Here are a few companies that are producing cocoa in an ethical manner:

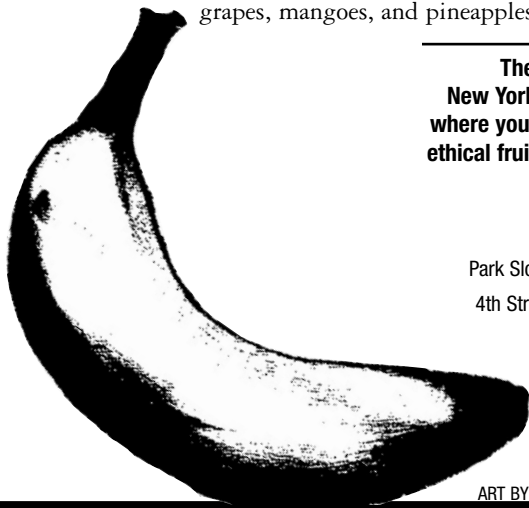
- Dagoba Organic Chocolate
- Dean's Beans
- Divine Chocolate
- Equal Exchange
- Ithaca Fine Chocolates
- La Siembra Co-Operative
- Sojourn
- Sweet Earth Organic
- Yachana Gourmet Fair Traded Fruit

Foods, Fyffes Banana and Noboa/Bonita. Prices have fallen by 40 percent in the past six years, forcing many farms to cut wages and benefits.

Workers at Chiquita are forbidden to form unions or even soccer teams. Cheap, conventional bananas are grown as monocrops, making them far more susceptible to disease, which leads to the use of large amounts of pesticides. Exposure to these chemicals has been linked with sterility in male workers and increased cancer rates in communities near the plantations, which drink from pesticide contaminated water.

Fair-trade fruit provides a seasonal alternative to unethical harvests. To obtain fair-trade certification, banana plantations must adhere to strict pesticide guidelines and create an organization that represents the workers to management and shares the premium generated by fair-trade sales.

Transfair USA currently certifies only four fruits: bananas, grapes, mangoes, and pineapples.



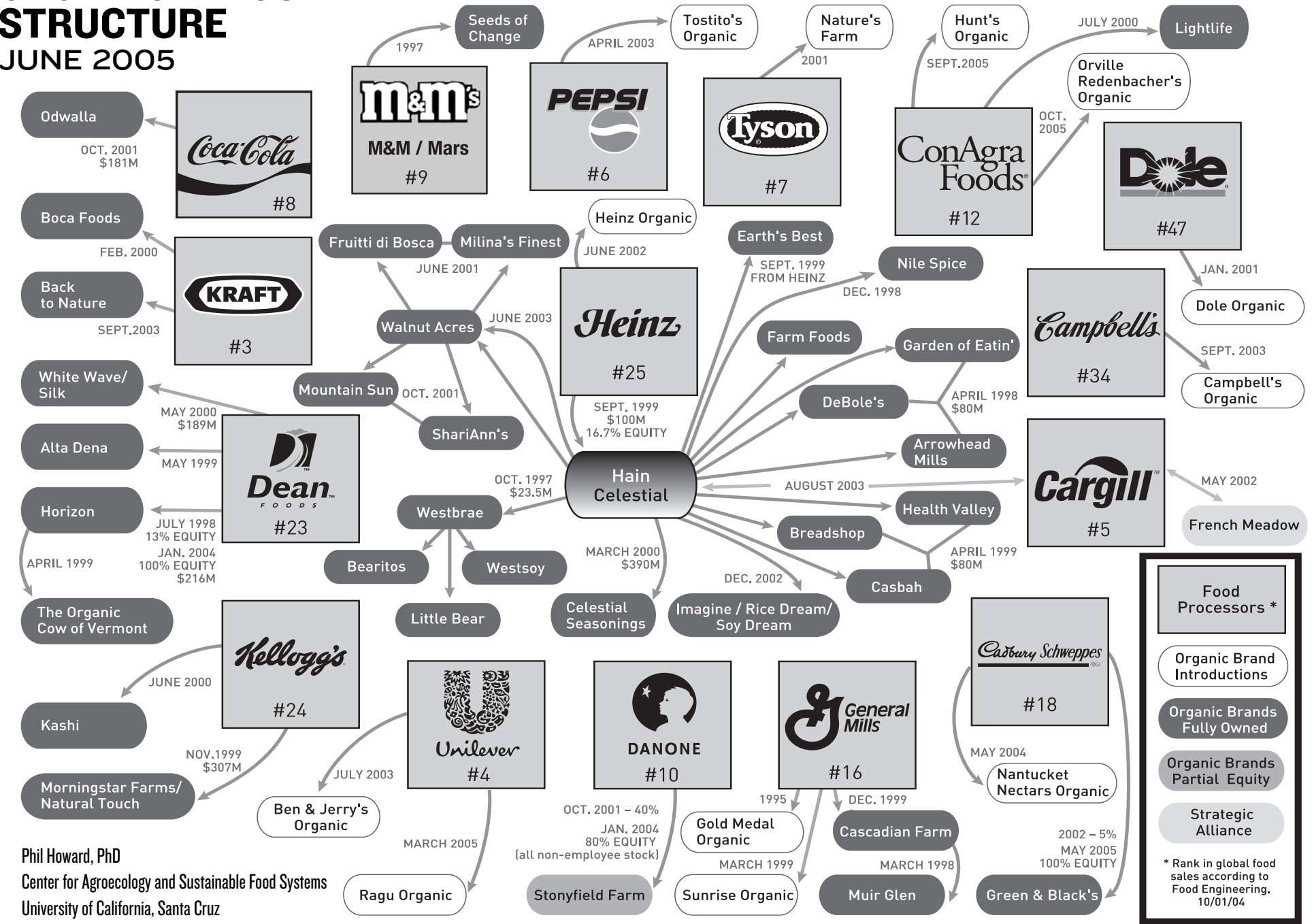
There are a few New York businesses where you can support ethical fruit production:

- Integral Yoga
- Prana
- Park Slope Food Co-op
- 4th Street Food Co-op

ART BY FRANK REYNOSO

ORGANIC INDUSTRY STRUCTURE

JUNE 2005



Phil Howard, PhD
Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems
University of California, Santa Cruz

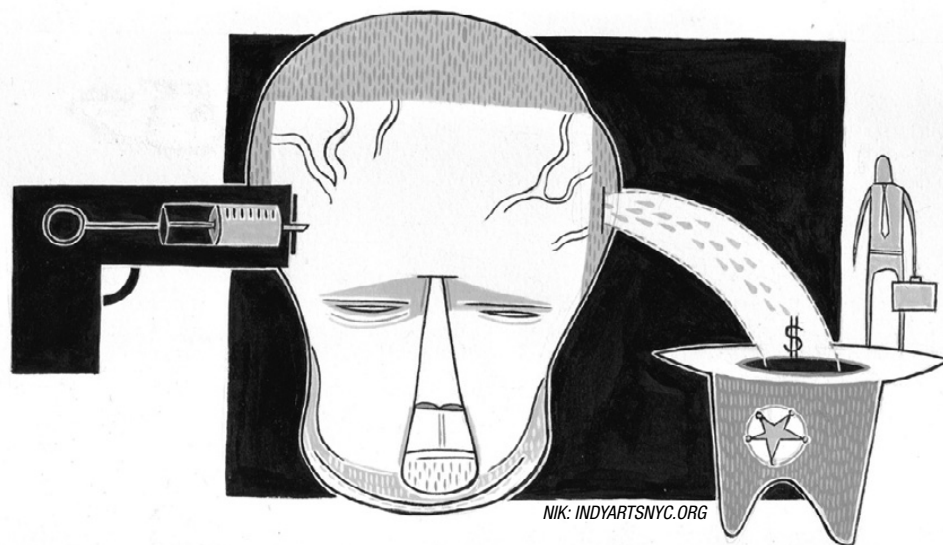
Juiced-Up Bats Make Baseball Owners Fat

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

When George W. Bush spoke out against the use of steroids in baseball during his 2004 State of the Union address, it raised some eyebrows. Was this more important than the environment, AIDS, or high housing costs, which Bush ignored?

We'll give Bush the benefit of the doubt for a moment (the first time that has ever happened in these pages). He's a baseball fan, and the president is entitled to speak out on moral issues. But the Aug. 1 suspension of Baltimore Orioles veteran Rafael Palmeiro for steroid use raises questions about Bush's highly profitable tenure as owner of the Texas Rangers. What did Bush know, and when did he know it?

Bush co-owned the Rangers from 1989 to 1998. Palmeiro played for them from 1989 to 1993. He began his career with respectable power, hitting 22 home runs in 1992. But after Jose Canseco, who claims that he introduced Palmeiro and two other Rangers to steroids, was traded to the team late that season, Palmeiro's home-run total jumped dramatically. He hit 37 in 1993, and topped that pace for the next decade. That change could have come from Palmeiro altering his batting style, from a doubles hitter who didn't strike out much to a free-swinging slugger, but his denials of steroid use



morphed into nuance – from “never, ever” to “never intentionally” – as unconvincingly as Bush's defenses of Karl Rove did.

Steroids do not improve a player's bat speed or hand-eye coordination. But for an athlete with major-league hitting skills, the muscle power they add can mean the difference between a warning-track fly ball and a home run. In the first 50 years of modern major-

league baseball, of racially integrated teams and regular night games, only one player ever hit more than 55 home runs in a season: Roger Maris of the 1961 Yankees. But in the six seasons, from 1997 to 2002, six players did, with Sammy Sosa and Mark McGwire doing it three times. McGwire obliterated Maris's record of 61 with a then-unbelievable 70 in 1998, and Barry Bonds surpassed that

with 73 in 2001. They weren't playing that many games in the thin air of Colorado.

Steroid use forces players to face a quandary: Would you take a drug that would trash your health and shrivel your penis if it could transform your performance from ordinary to stellar, and earn you several million dollars more – and you know your competitors are doing it? Bush and the other lords of baseball must have known something was up. Their world is small enough for gossip to travel fast. (For example, rumors about '80s Mets stars Dwight Gooden and Darryl Strawberry using cocaine spread well before they actually got caught.) But the 1998 home-run chase between McGwire and Sosa revived attendance, which had plummeted after the 1994-95 strike. Total league attendance set records in 1998, 2000, 2001, and 2004. Bonds' San Francisco Giants sold out every home game in 2000 and 2001.

The team owners' attitude about the health dangers and game corruption of steroid use probably resembles topless-bar owners' attitude about silicone breast implants. Their employees are mutilating their bodies in pursuit of success, but it's putting asses in the seats and selling kegloads of overpriced beer. And they'll be perfectly happy to blame any problems on the moral failures of individual players and their powerful union.

BOOK: Sports and Resistance

A Left Hook of a Book

BY BENNETT BAUMER

Sports – and I'm not talking about kick-ball and ultimate Frisbee – are often anathema to all that is sensitive and progressive. From ESPN broadcasting from a set resembling an Iraq war gunner's nest, or George Steinbrenner and other major-league baseball owners playing “God Bless America” during the seventh-inning stretch, pro sports can leave anyone left of right field nauseated. But *What's My Name, Fool?*, a haymaker of a book by Dave Zirin, presents the struggles of athletes that intersected with civil and women's rights movements.

Zirin illuminates little-known acts of resistance, such as professional athletes forming unions, and reclaims greats like Muhammad Ali and Jackie Robinson. Zirin also gives props to his predecessor, Lester “Red” Rodney, a sportswriter for the Communist *Daily Worker* newspaper, who used his column as a bully pulpit for the racial integration of baseball while writers for the corporate dailies followed the status quo and ignored the immense talent among players in the Negro Leagues.

While it is hard to imagine professional baseball players as general laborers, it was common for them to work in the off-season until the late 1960s. Players in every pro sports league have had to form unions to get their slice of the pie from money-hungry owners. For every sanitized multimillionaire like A-Rod and Air Jordan, there's a shunned player like former St. Louis Cardinals All-Star Curt Flood. Flood sacrificed his career in 1970 when he refused to accept being traded. He lost his court challenge to baseball's personnel rules, but opened the way for players to accept superior offers from other teams. Still, there are thousands of minor-league players who make less than a grand per

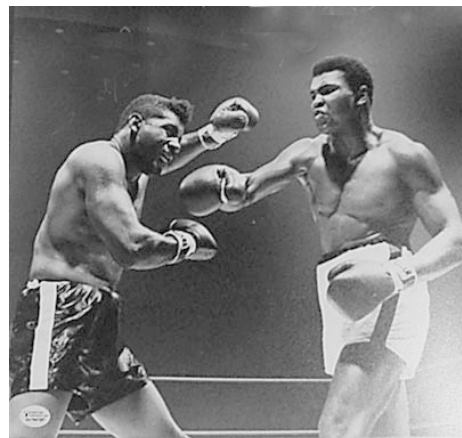
month, and collegiate basketball stars who bring in millions for their schools without getting paid – and the schools cry foul when players leave early for the NBA.

The book also covers pioneering female athletes who pushed the limits and fought sexism along the way. Seventies pro tennis star Billie Jean King served as the president of the tennis players' union, and in 1973, 50 million television viewers watched her smoke male chauvinist Bobby Riggs in straight sets during the historic “Battle of the Sexes” match. Riggs, 55 at the time and a former tennis champion, had boasted that “any half-decent male player could defeat even the best female players.”

Away from the headlines of the professional leagues are millions of young women who are playing sports in record numbers through funding provisions in Title IX. In 1972 when the law passed, one in 27 high-school girls played on a sports team; today, one in three participate.

Zirin finishes with an awkward defense of surly slugger Barry Bonds and stories of basketball players resisting imperialism. Zirin is right that steroids can't substitute for hitting ability or “there would be a potential All-Star in every Gold's Gym.” However, Bonds admitted to unknowingly using a cream containing 'roids once. In light of the Rafael Palmiero scandal, Bond's assertions raise doubt. Thankfully, Zirin leaves us with the uplifting stories of NBA star Etan Thomas, who's spoken out against the death penalty and the Iraq war; and Manhattanville College women's basketball standout Toni Smith. Smith turned her back on the flag during the national anthem before each game to protest the war. She stated, “If they don't want politics in sports, then they need to take the national anthem out, because that is inherently political.”

What's My Name Fool?
By Dave Zirin
Haymarket Books



What's in a Name? The Ali/Clay Shuffle

The title *What's My Name, Fool?* comes from Muhammad Ali's 1965 heavyweight-championship bout with Floyd Patterson. Ali, born Cassius Clay – a cocky, loudmouthed young man who'd predict his opponents' defeats in rhyme – had won the title in 1964 from Sonny Liston, who was like a '60s version of Mike Tyson: a ghetto thug with a devastating punch and trouble controlling his rage outside the ring. The next morning, the new champion announced that he was a Black Muslim, and he soon changed his name to Muhammad Ali. The reaction wasn't quite as if he'd proclaimed his allegiance to al-Qaeda, but it was close. “Cassius Clay is a slave name,” Ali explained.

Patterson, who'd been dethroned by Liston in 1962, cast his challenge to Ali as a “crusade to reclaim the title from the Black Muslims.” Like almost all of the sports media, he insisted on calling Ali “Cassius Clay.” Ali won a 12th-round TKO, punctuating his punches with “What's my name, fool?” Ernie Terrell, who also riled Ali by calling him “Clay” before their 1967 title bout, got similar treatment.

Ali was drafted into the Army less than three months after the Terrell fight. He refused to serve and was banned from boxing, at the peak of his career. “I'm not going 10,000 miles to help murder and burn another poor nation simply to continue the domination of white slave masters,” he said, also putting his objections in rhyme as “On the war in Viet Nam, I sing this song/I ain't got no quarrel with them Viet Cong.” He returned to boxing in 1970, and regained the title when he beat George Foreman in 1974.

—STEVEN WISHNIA



BOOKS, COFFEE, DEMOCRACY

VOXPOPNET.NET
718.940.2084

Sheldon Norberg – Sun. 14 August, 3:00PM

Join us as Sheldon Norberg, reads from his acclaimed memoir “Confessions of a Dope Dealer.”

Rebecca Pronsky – Wed. 17 August, 8:00PM

Brooklyn native known for her distinctive jazzy vocals.

Natalie Gelman – Thurs. 18 August, 8:30PM

NYC-born singer-songwriter \$5 suggested.

Madjkut – Friday 19 Aug., 9:00PM

Riding the line between 70s rock and artists of the 90s. \$5 suggested.

Dann Russo & Friends – Sat. 20 Aug., 9:00PM

From Brooklyn, NY. From the flamenco-inspired to straight rock and roll of “Run Out Of Reach,” Dann's music runs the gamut of styles. \$5 suggested.

“Workers Write: Tales from the Cubicle” – Mon. 22 Aug., 8:30PM

Readings from the writers of a collection “Workers Write: Tales from the Cubicle” FREE.

Owl Sounds – Thursday 25 Aug., 8:30PM

Their song “Cry of the Saw-Whet” was recently highlighted on ABC-NoRio and ‘All About Jazz’ newspaper. \$5 suggested.

Moodras – Friday 26 Aug., 9:00PM

Fans say their sound has elements of Grateful Dead, Steely Dan & Counting Crows. Nearly every song has captivating vocals with various combinations of 2-, 3-, and even 4-part harmonies. \$5 suggested.

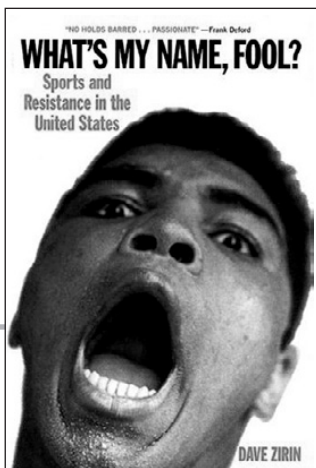
Shawn Fogel – Sat. 27 Aug., 9:00PM

\$5 suggested donation.

Mary Perna – Wednesday 31 Aug., 8:30PM

Local singer-songwriter! \$5 suggested.

1022 CORTELYOU RD
2.5 BLOCKS OFF THE Q TRAIN (CORTELYOU RD. STOP)
BROOKLYN



\$15

This book brilliantly and beautifully makes the connection between sports, politics and resistance.

■ **Chuck D., Public Enemy**

It is so refreshing to have a sportswriter who writes with such verve and intelligence, who also has a social conscience, and who refuses to keep those parts of his life separate.

■ **Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States***

DAVE ZIRIN

What's My Name, Fool?

Sports and Resistance in the United States

In humorous and accessible language, Zirin shows how sports express the worst, as well as the most creative and exciting, features of American society.



bluestockings

radical bookstore | activist center
fair trade cafe

172 ALLEN ST. •

212.777.6028

bluestockings.com

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26

7PM • \$5-10 Suggested donation

MoonPuss Music Presents an evening of musical performances with Bonfire Madigan, Casey Neill and guests. Bonfire Madigan is an avant-pop, chamber-rock experiment.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30

7PM • \$3-5 Suggested donation
Women's Poetry Jam & Women's Open Mike

Feature Writers: Kelly Zen-Yie Tsai & Susan Gerardi
Kelly Zen-Yie Tsai is a Chinese/Taiwanese American spoken word artist. Susan Gerardi is delighted to be back in NY after spending six years in LA. Open mike sign-up starts at 7PM, so come and deliver (up to) 8 minutes of your poetry, prose, songs, and spoken word.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31

7pm • Free
WATCHWORD: INDEPENDENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT
Oakland based literary magazine *Watchword* teams up with two extraordinary local magazines, *Pindeldyboz* and *6x6*. Local writers Matvei Yankelevich, Ada Limon, Douglas Light and others, will present their writing, with live music and general reverie!

Bigger Than Hip-Hop

The Black August Tradition & Upcoming Events

BY KAZEMBE BALAGUN

August is a significant month in Black history. It contains the birthdays of James Baldwin, Marcus Garvey and Charlie Parker, and the anniversaries of the Watts uprising in 1965 and the Nat Turner slave rebellion in 1831. And as it has 31 days, it counteracts the running joke that February was designated "Black History Month" because it's the shortest month of the year. Many revolutionary and progressive people of African descent have designated August "Black August."

The Black August tradition was initiated by political prisoners in California in response to the killings of brothers George and Jonathan Jackson. George Jackson, the older of the two, became politicized in the 1960s while serving more than 10 years for a \$70 robbery. Considered a threat by authorities at

California's Soledad Prison for his organizing, Jackson, along with Fleeta Drumgo and John Clutchette, was charged with murdering a guard in 1970. The three became known as the *Soledad Brothers*, and the case received worldwide attention after the publication of Jackson's book *Soledad Brother*. That August, Jonathan, then 17, attempted to win his brother's release by seizing a California courtroom, freeing three political prisoners, and taking the judge and district attorney hostage. Four of the five, including Jonathan and the judge, were shot to death during the ensuing chase. George Jackson was killed by a guard in San Quentin prison a year later, allegedly while trying to escape.

The tradition has expanded to the hip-hop generation through the annual Black August concert organized by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. Started in 1998 to raise money for and awareness about political pris-

oners/prisoners of war in the United States, the concert has taken a variety of themes, from AIDS in Africa to exchanges between Cuban and US-based hip-hop artists. This year's concert, with Talib Kweli, Mos Def, Jaguar Wright, Immortal Technique and Black Moon, took place at B.B. King's Aug. 7.

Other Black August events include a "Vision Political Film Series" at the Brecht Forum, featuring new work from emerging black filmmakers and a discussion with Halie Gerima. The Black Rock Coalition is hosting a concert-film series at the Knitting Factory on alternating Tuesdays, including screenings of Afro-Punk and music from HoneyChild and Jungli.

Web sites:

Black Rock Coalition: blackrockcoalition.org

Brecht Forum: brechtforum.org

Black August: blackaugust.org

BOOKS

Covering War When the Sides Aren't Clear

While in Vietnam, Michael Herr, author of the classic book *Dispatches*, sent occasional articles to *Esquire* magazine, where he had the enviable freedom to report what he wanted. Mostly, he hung out with soldiers, avoiding the PR drivel many of his colleagues had to chronicle to satisfy their editors.

Aaron Glanz's *How America Lost Iraq* is a descendant of *Dispatches*. Before Saddam Hussein's fall, Glanz was reporting for Pacifica Radio from Jordan: "I still saw no point in going to Iraq. ...If I couldn't interview anyone who wasn't hand-picked by the government — if it was impossible to tell the stories of the Iraqi people — then I wouldn't go."

But when Hussein fell, Glanz headed for Iraq, and he has — like Christian Parenti with *The Freedom* — performed a much-needed service by bringing the perspectives of everyday Iraqis to the fore.

Glanz is concerned primarily with description, not prescription. He interviews Iraqi after Iraqi on the street and in their homes; even

going door-to-door in a downtown Baghdad building. Early on, he finds the vast majority of Iraqis grateful for Saddam's overthrow; one mother said her next son would be named George Bush Jassim Farhan.

At the beginning of the occupation, Glanz reports that despite the lack of electricity and clean water, Iraqis were willing to cut the United States some slack. "Mr. Bush said in front of the whole world that we will have democracy in Iraq and I think he will... but he needs time," said one man.

But as the occupation drags on and men keep being carted off to undisclosed locations without charges, the mood shifts. One woman whose uncle was persecuted under Saddam tells Glanz that "Saddam was a bad man and Bush is a worse criminal." When asked about Iraq's prospects, she hesitates: "How can we think about the future — five years coming — when we live with no safety today?"

Amid growing disillusionment with the occupation, the United States shut down *al-Hawza*, the newspaper of Muqtada al-Sadr —

a monumental blunder. Glanz sums up:

"Soon after *al-Hawza's* closure, all hell broke loose. Within a week, the U.S. military would be at war with almost the entirety of Iraq's Arab population — Baghdad would be Ground Zero in both fights and almost all the goodwill inspired by America's removal of Saddam would be eliminated. In April 2004, America would lose Iraq."

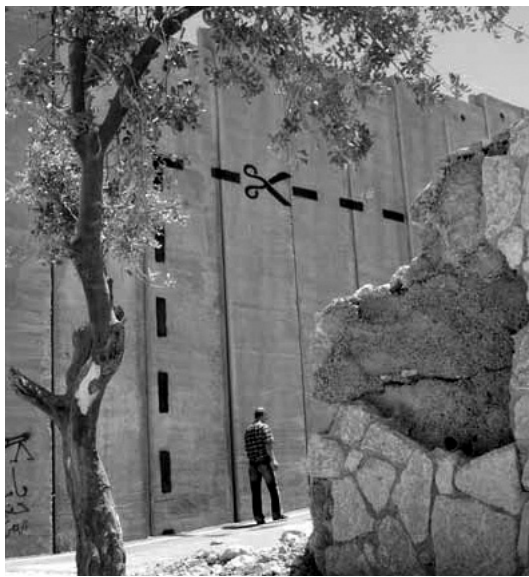
These U.S. moves ended in massive civilian casualties and dramatically shifted many Iraqis' perceptions. One relatively prosperous Sunni man explained: "Most people like me don't like Muqtada al-Sadr. His followers are gangsters. ...But now I've been thrown in prison twice by the Americans. Really I hate Muqtada. But now with the Americans going after him so strongly and Muqtada speaking out I respect him somehow."

Glanz also compellingly criticizes his employer and progressive media in general. During his first several months in Iraq, Glanz says his U.S.-based editors demanded stories on the botched war and occupation, while overlooking many Iraqis' excitement at

Saddam's ouster. Glanz wrote in an open letter: "Looking back, I believe that Pacifica did not show solidarity with the Iraqi people... but instead showed solidarity with the Ba'athist dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. It did so by downplaying the gross human-rights violations of the regime in an effort to build support for the antiwar movement. Instead, I believe that a radio station committed to social justice must report on the human-rights records of all governments in the world, especially those as brutal as that of Saddam Hussein."

Those who disagree point out that mainstream media were already focusing on Saddam's atrocities and that independent journalists needed to tell the other side. Still, Glanz's book raises thorny questions. How can progressive media promote human rights in nations like Iraq, North Korea, and Syria — nations on the official "enemies list" — without also providing justification for U.S. warmaking? Though there are no clear answers, Glanz does point a way forward — simply by listening to and recording what people are saying.

—GABRIEL THOMPSON



LOUD AS A BOMB: Banksy Hits 'The Wall'

BY JED BRANDT

Already a local graf hero for surreptitiously hanging his own anti-war paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the British street artist known only as Banksy completed a series of paintings and montages on the gigantic containment wall Israeli occupation forces are building throughout the West Bank. It's his best work yet.

The paintings aren't overtly political at first glance. Then you realize that this massive "canvas" of concrete and razor wire turns the remaining Arab areas of the West Bank into what Banksy calls "the world's largest open prison." The simple images of a white ladder reaching up to the heights, or a girl's silhouette carried aloft by a handful of balloons, remind us that simple humanity is as loud as a bomb in the face of absolute tyranny.

Palestinians are calling it the "Apartheid Wall," as it cuts through long-standing communities, isolates people from each other and puts large sections of Palestine under non-negotiable occupation. While the corporate media ruminate on the meaning of the proposed withdrawal of Israeli settlers from the Gaza strip, the rank brutality of penning in an entire nation has been largely ignored.

"It stands three times the height of the Berlin wall and will eventually run for over 700 kilometers – the distance from London to Zurich," Banksy said by way of explanation. "It's the ultimate activity holiday destination for graffiti writers." On his Website banksy.co.uk, he even calls the gallery of images from the series "holiday snaps."

This irreverent attitude confused at least one local, who complained Banksy's provocative picture was making the wall "beautiful," and asked him to stop.

Banksy's spokeswoman, Jo Brooks, said: "The Israeli security forces did shoot in the air threateningly, and there were quite a few guns pointed at him."

For more on Israel's construction of the wall, check electronicintifada.org



Making Palestine a prison nation

THE STRING

Free Music: DKT/MC5 and the Sun Ra Arkestra

BY STEVE WISHNIA

The Sun Ra Arkestra alighted in Central Park July 30 looking like the band from an extraterrestrial old folks' home. An array of about 20 musicians clad in golden headdresses and sequined caps filled the stage, fronted by five geriatric hornmen in electric-blue capes. Saxophonist Marshall Allen, a red-bearded octogenarian who's been directing the band since 1995, wore a cape resembling a shower curtain covered with Saturnesque tropical fish, with a matching cap shaped like a floppy, molten bicycle helmet.

For all the intergalactic trappings, the Arkestra's music was surprisingly earthy. Sun Ra, who died in 1993, made his name in the '60s as one of the first musicians to incorporate both electronic instru-

ments and African percussion, mixing it with free-jazz chaos and wrapping it all in cosmic rhetoric, with chants of "Space is the place" and "If you find Earth boring, just the same old thing." But his roots were in the big-band era, and that's what was showing at Summerstage. The Arkestra played jumping swing tunes driven by a booming bass drum, slow blues with guttural horn growls and bass bowing, and capped the set with New Orleans second-line funk. It's as if after a journey of several thousand light-years, they decided that the coolest and most spiritually uplifting place in the universe was a ballroom in Harlem in 1935.

Headliners DKT/MC5—the three surviving members of the MC5, whose DNA is found in all political punk-rock—also showed

their roots. The original band formed in the mid-'60s, beatnik/greaser teenagers playing James Brown and Chuck Berry covers in the working-class suburbs of downriver Detroit. Psychedelia and radicalism mutated them, and they became the house band of Michigan's hippie-leftist world, rocking the gospels of "high-energy music" and "total assault on the culture." They were the only rock band to play the protests at the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1968.

The tension between revolutionary politics and rockbiz reality soon proved too much. When the MC5 did a free concert at the Fillmore East, they managed to piss off both the Lower East Side radical community and promoter Bill Graham, who 86ed them from his empire. In

1969, their manager, John Sinclair, got nine years in jail for giving two joints to an undercover cop (he called the sentencing judge a "pig"). They drifted into heroin and alcohol, and broke up in 1972 after three albums. (Guitarist Wayne Kramer resurrected himself to make some of the better rock records of the last decade.)

The reunited band—Kramer, bassist Michael Davis, drummer Dennis Thompson, and Guns N'Roses guitarist Gilby Clarke, rotating Mark Arm (of Mudhoney), Lisa Kekaula (the Bellrays), and the fabulously wiseass Handsome Dick Manitoba (the Dictators) as lead singers—works more like a hard-rocking soul revue than a proto-punk energy orgy. Thompson set up a monstrous beat under Davis's Stax-

Volt basslines, creating a massive groove for the distorted guitars. The band's R&B roots were always apparent in songs like "Sister Anne" and "Over and Over" (which Kramer introduced by comparing the Iraq and Vietnam wars), but they also transformed LSD-sex hurricanes like "Lookin' at You" and "Rama Lama Fa Fa Fa" into soul grooves, with Kekaula stalking the stage like a boxer in silver heels. (Speaking of sex beats, if you want to know what great sex feels like for a straight man, check "Come Together," the highest-energy song they played.) At the end, the Arkestra musicians joined them for "Starship," the original Five's adaptation of a Ra tune.

It was obvious they were all having fun. And in an era of \$37.50 concert tickets, it was FREE.

WHERE DO I GET MY COPY OF THE INDYPENDENT

A FREE PAPER FOR FREE PEOPLE

BELOW 14TH ST.

**Bluestockings
Books & Café**
172 Allen St.

Times Up!

49 E. Houston St.

Lotus Café

Clinton & Stanton Sts.

**May Day Books
at Theater for
the New City**
155 First Ave.
(Btw 9th & 10th Sts.)

Housing Works
126 Crosby St.

LGBT Center

213 W. 13th St.

**Shakespeare & Co.
Books**

1 Whitehall St.

Brecht Forum

451 West St.

14TH TO 96TH ST.

Revolution Books
9 W. 19th St.

Chelsea Sq. Diner
23rd St. & 9th Ave.

Freaks Local 413
413 W. 44th St.

**Second Wave
Laundrocenter**
55th St. & 9th Ave.

ABOVE 96TH ST.

Labyrinth Books
536 W. 112th St.

Kim's Video

113th St. & Broadway

Coogan's Bar

169th St. & Broadway

BROOKLYN

Tillie's of Brooklyn
248 DeKalb Ave.

Vox Pop

1022 Cortelyou Rd.

Green Apple Café
110 DeKalb Ave.

Marquet Patisserie
680 Fulton St.

**Freddy's Bar and
Backroom**

Dean St. & 6th Ave.

**Community Book
Store**

7th Ave. & Carroll Sts.

Tea Lounge

Union St. @ 7th Ave.
9th St. @ 7th Ave.

Atlantis Super

Laundry Center
472 Atlantic Ave.

Photoplay Video

933 Manhattan Ave.

Verb Cafe

Bedford Ave. & N. 5th

Jane Doe Books
93 Montrose Ave.

**Make the Road
by Walking**
301 Grove St.

Spoken-Words Cafe

4th Ave. & Union St.

QUEENS

Sunnyside Library

43-06 Greenpoint Ave.

**East Elmhurst
Library**

95-06 Astoria Blvd.

**Langston Hughes
Library**

100-01 Northern Blvd.

Café Aubergine

49-22 Skillman Ave.

Broadway Library
4020 Broadway

BRONX

Bronx Museum

165th St. & Grand
Concourse

The Point

940 Garrison Ave.

Baychester Library
2049 Asch Loop

LONG ISLAND

Free Space

Ronkonkoma

16 E. 8th St. Huntington

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

august

Selected Shorts by young progressive
Black/Latino filmmakers: *Super Nigga!*, *Red
Eye*, *Isolated Incidents*

Tue Aug 30

7:30 pm • \$6/\$10/\$15

Eyes of the Rainbow & Mission Against Terror
Featuring the story of Assata Shakur, the
Black Panther and Black Liberation Army
leader who escaped from prison and was
given political asylum in Cuba, where she
has lived for more than 15 years.

Wed Aug 31

7:30pm • \$6/\$10/\$15

Sorry Ain't Enough

Dir. Emily Blakem. A film exploring the case in
favor of slavery reparations.

THU AUG 18

12pm • FREE

PERIPHERAL CITY

A Lower Manhattan performance tour by Red
Dive presented by the Lower Manhattan
Cultural Council.
Chase Plaza, 55 Water St.

5:30pm • FREE

RED EARTH

Live music with cultural and political influ-
ences to create an explosive sound.
Smithsonian National Museum of the
American Indian, One Bowling Green

FRI AUG 19

8:30pm • \$8

ROOFTOP FILMS: THEFT IS PROPERTY

On the lawn at Automotive High School
50 Bedford Ave., Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

SAT AUG 20

2pm • \$12

WALKING TOUR: AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE IN
LOWER MANHATTAN

This tour visits the African Burial Ground and
other historic sites including stations on the
Underground Railroad, the former location of
New York's slave market, the African Free
School, reservations suggested. Meet at the
South Street Seaport Museum entrance,
12 Fulton St.

MON AUG 22

7-8:30pm • FREE (\$3 for snacks)

SUMMER READING CIRCLE: A discussion of
Mark Twain's searing, 1905 anti-imperialist
expose of colonial oppression in the Congo.
Freedom Hall, 113 W. 128 St in Harlem (just
west of Malcolm X/Lenox Blvd.) (212)222-0633.

FRI AUG 26

6:30pm • FREE

SUNSET JAM ON THE HUDSON

Drumming circle with West African and Afro-
Haitian, Brazilian and Cuban rhythms. Bring
your own drums, whistles and bells or borrow.
Wagner Park, (212) 267-9700

8:30pm • \$8

ROOFTOP FILMS: BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL

Selections from the Bike FF to benefit the
Nat'l Lawyers Guild Critical Mass team
On the lawn at Automotive High School
50 Bedford Avenue, Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

SAT AUG 27

12 – 5pm • FREE

NEIGHBORHOOD ENERGY FORUM

We seek better energy solutions for our
neighborhoods.

All Saints Church, 43-12 46 St.,
Sunnyside (#7 to 46th St. Queens)

7:30pm • \$3 play\$7 dinner

(6:30pm Dinner)

SISTER! SISTER! A CELEBRATION OF THE
JOYS AND STRUGGLES OF WOMEN AROUND
THE WORLD

This play weaves together a dramatic mosaic
of actual testimonies and moving stories by
and about women.
Freedom Hall, 113 West 128th St. (btwn.
Lenox/Malcolm X Blvd and 7th Ave, Harlem.
(212) 222-0633

TUE AUG 30

6:30pm • FREE

SAFETY IN THE SUBWAYS

TOWN HALL MEETING

Tell MTA to put rider safety first.

Lafayette Ave. Church @ 85 S. Oxford St.,
Downtown Brooklyn

ONGOING

THROUGH AUGUST

FREE! VARIOUS EXERCISE CLASSES
NO PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED!

BRONX:

T – F: 7– 10am

Crotona Park East

Claremont Pkwy & Crotona Park East

(718) 430-4675

T & Th: 5 – 8pm; W, F: 7 – 10am;

Sat:10am – 1pm.

St. Mary's Recreation Center, 450 East 145th St.
at St. Ann's Ave. (718) 402- 5160

BROOKLYN

T–F: 7–10am; M-F: 6–9pm; Sat: 9am – 12pm
Brownsville Recreation Center, 1555 Linden
Blvd. btwn Hegeman & Christopher St.,
(718) 385-4633

M – Th: 3 – 8pm

Bushwick Beacon Lighthouse

I.S. 383, 1300 Greene Ave. (718) 574-1367

M – Th: 6 – 8pm

Family Dynamics Center (Bed Stuy) M.S. 35,
272 McDonough St. (718) 453-7004

MANHATTAN

Tu–F: 8–10am; Tu, Th:6–7pm; Sat: 8 – 11am
Thomas Jefferson Recreation Center
2180 1st Ave. at E112th St. (212) 860-1383

M: 7– 8pm; Tu–F: 5:30 – 7pm

Jackie Robinson Recreation Center

89 Bradhurst Ave. btwn 146th & 147th St.s,
(212) 234-9607

Call (212) 360-3300 for more information,
there are other locations with classes.

THROUGH 9/3/05

DIY:THE AESTHETICS OF LIFE

This group show features artists who create
works through a drive for self-sufficiency out-
side the realm of corporate dependency.

148 Orchard St, at Stanton St.

(917) 312-7270

THROUGH 9/21/05

YUNG HO CHANG: BOXES

Chambers Fine Art

The first solo exhibition for this Chinese artist
widely recognized as one of the most
provocative architects working today.

210 11th Ave, at 25th St., Chelsea

(212) 414-1169

AUGUST 21-28

HOWL FESTIVAL

Celebrating the neighborhood's role as the
cradle of counterculture. An explosion of
dance, film, food, music, performance, paint-
ing, poetry, sculpture, and theater. Visit
www.howlfestival.org or check L Magazine
for details. Opening Night Party @ The
Delancey

THROUGH SEPTEMBER

V W X YELLOW ELEPHANT UNDERWEAR /

H I J KIDDY ELEPHANT UNDERWEAR

Sculptures by Chinatsu Ban, as part of *Little
Boy*, a major exhibition hosted by Japan
Society Gallery.

Doris C. Freedman Plaza (5th Ave. @ 60th St.)

THE INDYPENDENT

has open meetings every Tuesday at 7pm at
34 E. 29th St., 2nd floor.

Call for more info: 212.684.8112

Other NYC Indymedia Group Meetings:

Photo Team: 7pm Mondays

Video Team: 7pm Tuesdays

SAT AUG 13

8–10pm, Performances, 10-2:00am after-
party • \$10

IT'S A BROWNOUT

Benefit for Youth Solidarity Summer that pro-
vides radical political education for young
activists of South Asian descent.

Alwan for the Arts, 16 Beaver Street, 4th Fl.
(btwn. Broad & Broadway) Financial District,
(347) 262-6096

SAT & SUN AUG 13 & 14

9am – 6pm • FREE

CONEY ISLAND VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

Preliminaries: Sat., Championship: Sun.

Call (212) 360-1319 to pre-register
at the beach 10th Street & the Boardwalk

11:30am • FREE

HONG KONG DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

Dragon boat racing, music, martial arts
demonstrations, dancing, food and more.

Sat. 11:30am | Dragon Dancing Team,
12:30pm | Shaolin Kung Fu 2:30pm | Coco
Sukali's Band Sunday • August 14 10:00am
| Drum Spirit of China,11:00am | Chinese Folk
Co., 12:00pm | QuasiLulu, 1:00pm | Shaolin
Kung Fu, 2:00pm | Calpulli Mexican Dance
Company

All events at Flushing Meadows Park, Queens

WED AUG 17

6pm • FREE

BIO-RESEARCH LABS: ARE THEY SAFE?

Demand Columbia University respect our right
to know about Bio Research labs in our neigh-
borhoods. Refreshments and Air Conditioning
IS 195, 625 West 133rd St. btwn. Broadway
& 12th Ave.

FEATURED EVENTS

**VISUAL LIBERATION FILM
SERIES: PART OF THE BLACK
AUGUST FESTIVAL**

All films screening at the Brecht Forum

West Side Highway & Bank St.

(at 14th St. latitude w/great parking)

Sun Aug 14

4pm • \$6/\$10/\$15

The Black and the Green,45-min/documen-
tary, Discussion with Filmmaker St. Clair

special INTRODUCTORY OFFER

\$10 FOR 10 ISSUES

>>> a free paper for free people <<<

☐ Bill me

☐ Check enclosed

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

E-Mail

Phone

Regular subscription rate: \$25/year (23 issues) SPECIAL: 4 years for \$99! Make checks payable to the
NYC IMC Print Team and send to: 34 East 29th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10016. Or for even faster
service email your address to indysubs@yahoo.com and we will begin your subscription right away!

